



هَذَا مِنَ الْأَصْلِ

THE INDEPENDENT

Thursday 2 October 1997

(IR 50p) 45p No 3,417

Six disasters; 368 people dead; no successful prosecutions. Now the Government acts



Bradford FC stadium fire
May 1985
56 dead



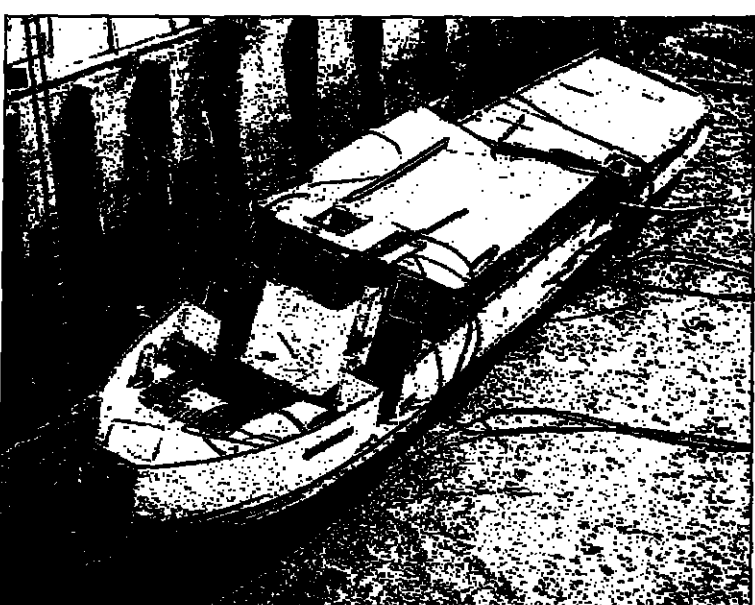
Zeebrugge ferry capsizing
March 1987
188 dead



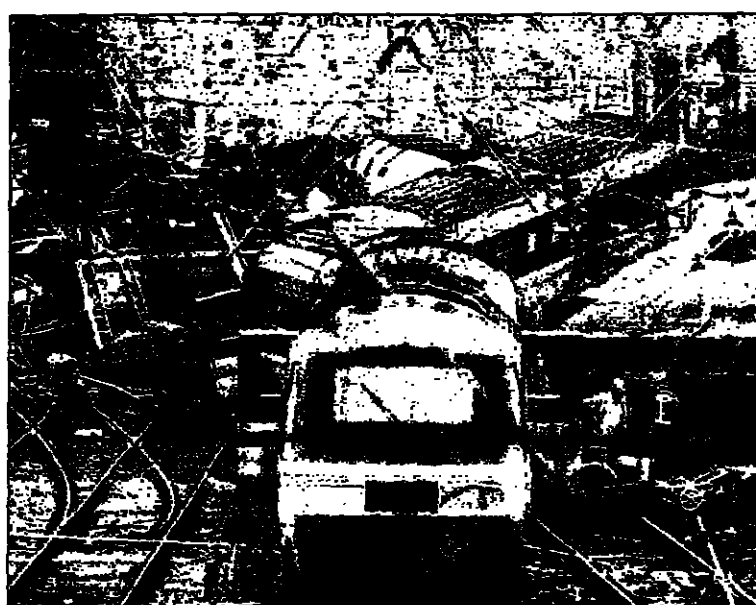
King's Cross station fire
November 1987
31 dead



Clapham Junction rail crash
December 1988
35 dead



Sinking of the Marchioness
August 1989
51 dead



Southall train crash
September 1997
7 dead

TODAY'S NEWS

BT's merger in trouble

The transatlantic merger between British Telecom and MCI, the biggest takeover in UK corporate history, looked all but dead last night after a rival and higher-bid for MCI emerged out of the blue. WorldCom, the US's fourth biggest telephone operator, is bidding \$30bn compared with BT's offer, which values MCI at \$22bn. Failure to win the deal would place a huge question mark over BT's international strategy and its top management. Pages 22 and 23

Banks's apology

The career of the Sports Minister, Tony Banks, was under threat last night after he was forced to apologise for describing the Tory leader, William Hague, as a "foetus" and adding insult to injury and offence by remarking that "I bet there's a lot of Tory MPs that wish they hadn't voted against abortion now".

A new offence of corporate killing is being planned by the Government to prosecute directors of companies where people died as a result of failures at the top. Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, says the Home Secretary is certain to introduce legislation.

The litany of disasters seemed endless - names such as *Herald of Free Enterprise*, Bradford, the *Marchioness* became known nationally and internationally as symbols for death, pain and disfigurement.

After each tragedy the inevitable questions: how could it happen, who was to blame? Inquiries followed and while blame was apportioned in some cases to individuals, the law was unable fully to consider the role of large companies involved and those who run them.

But now company directors could be charged with "corporate killing" and face unlimited fines under a new offence being planned by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, to punish safety failures which lead to disasters. The Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, has given his strong backing to the measure, and ministerial sources said the Southall rail crash in which seven passengers died last month has increased the pressure within Government for action.

The Labour Party conference in Brighton yesterday passed an emergency resolution on the Southall rail crash calling for the introduction of measures which would enable charges of corporate manslaughter to be brought if directors can be shown to have failed to deal with a foreseeable danger.

"The Home Secretary is giving it active consideration. He is sure to come forward with proposals, but it is a question of parliamentary timing," said a source. The Deputy Prime Minister's backing is certain to ensure the Home Secretary will be given time for a Bill before the general election, but the sources said it was unlikely the measure could be included in the law and order Bill being introduced in November.

A new offence of "corporate killing" was called for in a Royal Commission report in March last year, and Mr Straw told a Bar



Prescott: Has given strong backing to 'corporate killing' legislation

conference last weekend that he would be implementing its findings. The commission recommended that the company directors should be liable to unlimited fines and forced to remedy the failures which led to the cause of death.

Disasters such as the King's Cross fire in which 31 died, the Clapham rail crash in which 35 were killed, and the sinking of *The Herald of Free Enterprise* off Zeebrugge with the loss of 188 lives brought calls for prosecutions, but no corporate prosecutions were possible - although it was felt that safety measures were wanting. The main reason why they failed to bring corporate manslaughter charges was that it could only be brought where a corporation has acted through the "controlling mind" of one of its agents.

One of the few company bosses to be convicted of manslaughter was Peter Kite, the owner of OLL Limited, who was jailed for three years and his company fined £60,000 following the 1994 Lyme Bay canoeing tragedy in which four teenagers died. He was found guilty because he was directly in charge of the activity centre where the children were staying.

The weakness of the law in tackling corporate responsibility for manslaughter was criticised by the judge when charges were brought against some of the seamen on *The Herald of Free Enterprise*, but no successful prosecution was brought against

P&O, the owners. The Zeebrugge disaster led to the Law Commission review which is now expected to end in legislation.

The British Rail Board admitted liability after the 1988 Clapham rail crash, which resulted from careless work by signal engineers. BR was responsible under the "vicarious liability" principle and paid compensation reaching £1m in some cases, but no one was prosecuted for manslaughter. The privatisation of the railways under the Tories heightened calls for more stringent penalties imposed on companies for failing to implement safety recommendations made in the Clapham disaster inquiry.

The Independent has learned that John Monks, the leader of the TUC, approached the Home Secretary before the Southall rail crash to press for action. The Deputy Prime Minister, who campaigned for tougher rail safety procedures in Opposition, ordered the Southall rail crash inquiry should be held in public.

The inquiry is expected to investigate whether the rail franchise operators or Railtrack, who run the lines, were at fault for not operating safety devices recommended after the Clapham rail tragedy. Ministerial sources said the police were already looking at the possibility of a corporate manslaughter charge.

The driver of the train was defended at the Labour conference, and there were claims he was being made a scapegoat in the press. Lew Adams, leader of Aslef, called on the conference to back his union's motion for a new charge of corporate manslaughter to be introduced. The emergency motion tabled by Aslef, said: "Nine years after the Clapham crash, the inquiry's recommendation that automatic train protection be installed has still not happened and has been abandoned by Railtrack on the grounds of cost."

Jimmy Knapp, the leader of the RMT, which backed the motion, last night welcomed the move. "I think the law should be changed as quickly as possible because you have a disaster like *The Herald of Free Enterprise* where a prosecution failed and the judge expressed regret that he could not continue the case against the company. We have got to make sure that those who are responsible for the policies that cause these accidents are prosecuted."

Conference reports, pages 8, 9

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Israel has released Sheikh Ahmed Hussein, the spiritual leader of Hamas, the Islamic militant organisation. He was sick, perhaps dying; but, as Patrick Cockburn reports, behind his release lies a murky tale of an Israeli espionage operation that went wrong.

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Dave Alred, acknowledged as the best rugby kicking coach in the world, has been recruited to work with the England team.

PEOPLE



Gowrie to leave Arts Council a year early

Lord Gowrie, the former Tory minister, is to step down a year early from his post as Arts Council chairman. Announcing that he would leave in April, he said it was for "entirely personal" reasons. However, it is also true that the Labour government is ambivalent about the usefulness of the Arts Council in distributing government grants to the arts, and the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, has been critical about the way the council allowed the crisis at the Royal Opera House to develop.

The post of chairman is a high-profile and important one, as he or she can play a guiding role in developing arts policy and in rewarding or punishing arts institutions financially. Lottery money given to causes by the Arts Council has further increased its influence and that of the chairman.

Crucially, the post is unpaid, limiting the people who can afford to take it on. Possible choices to succeed Lord Gowrie could include the Labour peer Lord Putnam and the former Tory heritage

secretary David Mellor. Both have already been given jobs by the Ministry of Culture, Media and Sport.

Lord Gowrie took up his five-year appointment in April 1994. He famously quit as arts minister in Margaret Thatcher's government in 1985, saying nobody could be expected to live in central London on the then ministerial salary of £33,000 a year.

Yesterday he said: "My reasons for leaving... are entirely personal. The job has been one of the most challenging of my career and also one of the most exciting and rewarding." But it took up most of his working day, he said, adding: "I do have current professional demands on my time." Lord Gowrie, who is a director of Sotheby's, wants to spend more time working as chairman of Development Securities, an office-development company. "I am chairman of a fast-rising plc. I have other commitments on my time and the chairmanship of the Arts Council was presented to me as being a busy, active but non-executive job." David Lister

Breast cancer plea by Dani Behr

The television presenter Dani Behr yesterday revealed how breast cancer had cast a shadow over two generations of her family. The former presenter of *The Word* was helping launch Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which runs throughout October. She said it was never too early to start taking precautions against the illness, which kills 14,000 women in the UK each year.

"... Two of my great-grandmothers and one grandmother died from it," she said. "It's really im-

portant for women to get the message about checking for lumps in their breasts, especially women my age. It's easy for us to think that it won't happen to us, but my grandmother was 33 when she died, only 10 years older than me, so we can't ignore it."

Breast cancer affects one in 12 British women and kills more females than any other cancer in the country, making the UK one of those worst affected by the disease.

— Jayo Moyes

UPDATE

EMPLOYMENT

Young escape the jobless trap

Youth unemployment is falling faster than for adults in half of Britain's regions, a survey showed yesterday. Adult unemployment has been cut by 46 per cent in the four years to July of this year. But the figure for young people is up to 60 per cent.

The GMB union survey showed that the largest fall was in the South-East (60.4 per cent), followed by the South-West (56.3 per cent), the West Midlands (51.6 per cent) and East Anglia (50.6 per cent).

The fastest falls in youth unemployment have been in the South-East counties of Surrey, Sussex, Berkshire and Hertfordshire. John Edmonds, general secretary of the GMB, said: "Labour's New Deal ensuring welfare to work opportunities for the under-25s and the long-term unemployed is critical if we are to tackle those remaining areas of higher unemployment." Unions were ready to join the New Deal task-forces which will be set up throughout the country, Mr Edmonds added.

SMOKING

Teenage girls get nicotine habit

Smoking levels among girls aged 11 to 15 are at their highest level for 15 years, according to a survey. The number of young teenage girls who smoke has increased steadily over the past decade and they are now more likely to do so than boys.

In 1996, 15 per cent of girls in this age group were regular smokers and more than half had smoked at some point. This compared with 11 per cent who smoked regularly in 1982. The findings from the Office for National Statistics survey of secondary school children in England sparked fresh concern about young people's health.

Donald Reid, chief executive of the Association for Public Health, said: "The rise in smoking among children is a major disaster for public health. It will lead to increased deaths from cancer, heart disease and smoker's lung in the long run, and to the loss of limbs from smoker's gangrene by the age of 30, in some cases. Girls who become pregnant while smoking risk losing their babies - smoking is implicated in 4,000 miscarriages, 400 still births and 300 cot deaths annually."

The survey - *Smoking Among Secondary School Children in 1996* - found 13 per cent of secondary schoolchildren aged 11-15 were regular smokers. In 1996, 11 per cent of boys in this age group smoked regularly and 53 per cent said they had never smoked. In Scotland, 14 per cent of 12 to 15-year-olds were smokers in 1996, compared with 12 per cent in 1994.

HEALTH CARE

Hospital guidelines launched

Minimum standards of care for patients requiring emergency admission to hospital were launched yesterday. The voluntary standards set out what patients can expect if they go into hospital suffering from a range of conditions such as a stroke, asthma attack or heart attack.

They include where they should be treated, by whom, the training health professionals should have received, and the kind of assessment and treatment they should be given. The standards, drawn up by the Health Services Accreditation Unit, an NHS body set up to improve the quality of care, in consultation with doctors, nurses and other professionals, were welcomed by the Royal College of Physicians. John Ward, vice-president, said: "This publication is a vital step in informing management of the difficulties of the situation."

Jeremy Lawrence

TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.14	Italy (lira)	2716
Austria (schillings)	19.41	Japan (yen)	192.59
Belgium (francs)	57.07	Malta (lira)	0.60
Canada (\$)	2.17	Netherlands (guilders)	3.10
Cyprus (pounds)	0.81	Norway (kroner)	11.18
Denmark (kroner)	10.58	Portugal (escudos)	279.07
France (francs)	9.28	Spain (pesetas)	232.99
Germany (marks)	2.77	Sweden (kroner)	11.91
Greece (drachme)	440.38	Switzerland (francs)	2.28
Hong Kong (\$)	12.13	Turkey (lira)	2682.21
Ireland (punts)	1.07	USA (\$)	1.57

Source: Thomas Cook

Sisters who fell out over transplant heal the rift

Two sisters who fell out when one said she could not donate bone marrow to save the other's life because of her fear of hospitals, declared their quarrel over yesterday.

Susan Squires conquered her phobia and was admitted to hospital to provide the marrow for the transplant last month. Yesterday her sister, Angela Latham, 34, a mother of two who has leukaemia, thanked her as she prepared to leave hospital.

"I cannot thank her enough. She's still my sister after all that's happened and I'm very grateful for what she's done." Ms Squires' initial refusal caused a three-year rift between the sisters, who live streets apart in Blackpool.

After a worldwide search of 4 million donors failed to turn up a match, she agreed to the operation. But the sisters were a poor match and doctors at Manchester Royal Infirmary gave Mrs Latham a less than 50 per cent chance of success.

Jeremy Lawrence

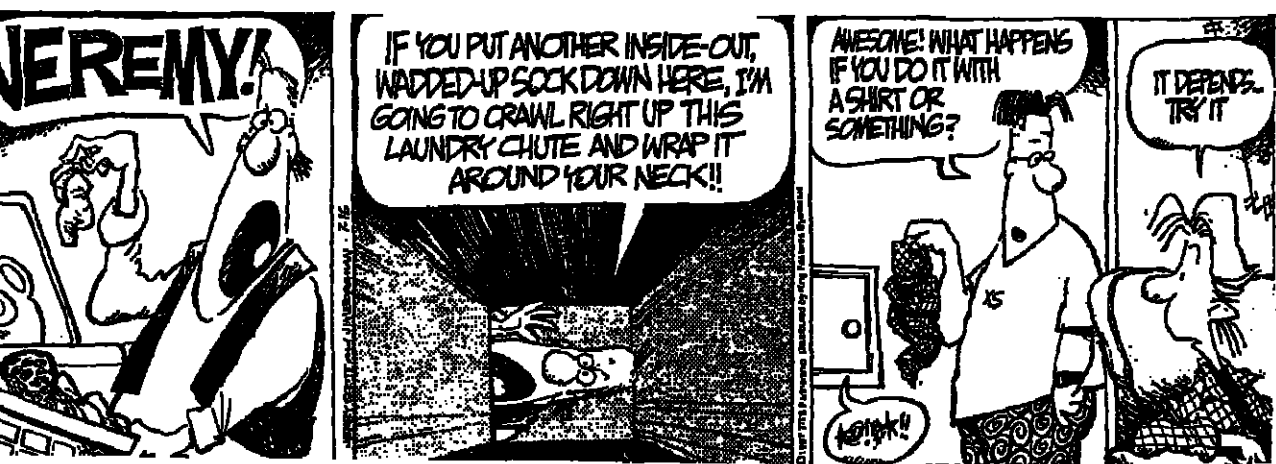
7.30 FOR 8

by Chris Priestley



ZITS

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



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New facts expose flaw in case against nanny

On Monday, the British nanny Louise Woodward, 19, will appear in a United States court, charged with murdering a nine-month-old baby in her charge. If convicted, she will receive life imprisonment, without parole. *Jojo Moyes* examines concerns that she will not get a fair trial.

The prosecution case against Louise Woodward in the Massachusetts Superior Court will claim it is the simple case of a baby murdered by a nanny unable to cope with his incessant crying. But missing evidence, the lack of an independent autopsy and prejudicial coverage, say Miss Woodward's supporters, all suggest the Cheshire teenager's guilt is far from proven.

"I'm flabbergasted at how the procedures have differed from anything you would get in Britain. I'm very angry and I'm very frightened," her father, Gary Woodward, told the *Independent* yesterday. "But I can't let Louise see how worried I am. She's petrified."

Miss Woodward travelled to the US after a short course in childcare, during her year out. Last November she moved in with the Eappen family in Boston, looking after two boys: Brendan, 2, and 9-month-old Matthew.

On February 4 police received a call from Miss Woodward, saying Matthew had become ill. He was taken to hospital, but died, after emergency surgery, five days later. According to police, she confessed that she may have shaken the baby after becoming frustrated by his crying. She was taken into custody, charged with assault and battery, and subsequently murder, to which she is pleading not guilty.

The case, according to the American media, is cut and dried. The autopsy revealed a two-and-a-half-inch fracture at the back of Matthew's head, which the prosecution say was caused by a severe blow. The timing of the injury is the

cornerstone of the case against Miss Woodward; they say it occurred just hours before the baby got to hospital. But Miss Woodward's own - previously unpublished - testimony, which will tonight feature on Carlton's *The Big Story*, contradicts this. Matthew, she said, had been crying all day. When she checked on him she found "he didn't look normal. I think he had changed colour. I don't think he was focusing ... I picked him up and he vomited. So I assumed he choked."

It was at this point, after giving him first aid, that she admitted to shaking him; not out of frustration, but in an attempt to save him. "I was just like, you know, Matthew. I was calling his name ... He wasn't doing anything." The defence will argue that Matthew's head injury could have occurred two days ear-



Miss Woodward in the US after studying child care

lier - when the nanny was not working. But a number of factors are hampering their case.

Despite repeated requests, the *Big Story* discovered, key samples of the baby's brain have not been made available. A week ago Miss Woodward's lawyers were told that roughly 48 cm sq of the brain tissue had "gone missing" - doctors having apparently thrown it away. Judge Hiller Zobel ruled that this had happened "carelessly, not maliciously" and that it was "not prej-

udicial", although the disappearance went against a court order. Stephen Jakobi, of the organisation Fair Trials Abroad, says the court will hear another piece of evidence: that Matthew was found to have a week-old wrist fracture.

"Either there's some condition accounting for the fact that the wrist was fractured and the baby was coping with it so that nobody noticed. Or it could have been someone else - it occurred while Louise wasn't around, as far as we can work out. All this adds up to reasonable doubt," Mr Jakobi, who has been advising the family, said yesterday.

But Miss Woodward's lawyers have another problem: Matthew's was buried before the defence team could perform an independent autopsy. Bernard Knight, one of Britain's leading pathologists, said: "What disturbs me is that there is no second autopsy, that some of the specimens seem to have vanished and that some statements from the medical witnesses well before trial ... are so prejudicial. The whole thing just seems wrong."

From prison Miss Woodward recently agreed to a lie detector test, after which the examiner said he was "95 per cent certain" she was truthful. Judge Zobel ruled the results inadmissible. Miss Woodward has been refused bail, on grounds that she may try to flee. Her mother, Sue, has been in Boston and visits daily to keep her spirits up. But due to the District Attorney's decision to call her as a potential witness, Mrs Woodward will not be allowed to see Louise for the whole three-week trial, a decision Gary Woodward described yesterday as "a pretty low trick".

"I feel very bitter about that. There's no reason for them to call Sue. It just means she can't support Louise during the trial, and she and I can't support each other in court."

The strain of keeping a family together in such circumstances is beginning to tell. "We've had no life since February. We're mentally, physically and financially drained," he said.

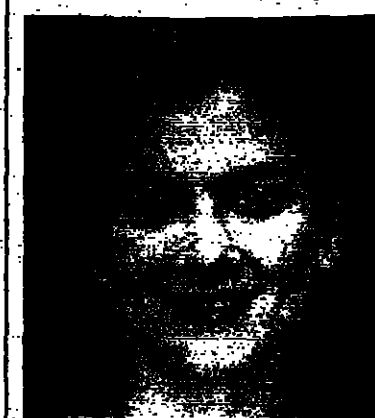
The Big Story: "Presumed Guilty" will be shown tonight on ITV at 7.30.



On trial: The court will hear that Louise Woodward could not cope with the baby's crying

IN THE
INDEPENDENT
TOMORROW

EYE ON FRIDAY



Harold Pinter, Anna Friel and a campaign to save a death row writer

MUSIC
Bob Dylan. He's back. He's in Bournemouth. Does it matter?



Vaughan Williams. More European than English

Paris falls quiet as smog alert forces citizens to get out and walk

A strange quiet fell on the streets of Paris yesterday. All private cars with even-numbered registration numbers were ordered off the roads after nitrogen dioxide pollution reached danger levels. *John Lichfield* reports.



Breath of fresh air: A policeman confronts a Paris motorist

Paris may be a conservative city but yesterday it helped to be odd. For the first time, the government enforced a new law against air pollution which bans, on alternate days, half of the private cars in the city and suburbs. Yesterday, only those cars with odd registration numbers were allowed to drive.

An estimated one million cars were ordered off the roads. Taxis, delivery vehicles, doctors, journalists and cars carrying more than three people were exempted. All public transport was free (the government footing the bill, estimated at £150,000). First indications were that the restrictions were broadly respected, despite some confusion and a decision by the authorities to warn, rather than fine, offenders. Police said that traffic in Paris was 15 per cent down on normal (it seemed even quieter). The Prime Min-

ister, Lionel Jospin, and environment minister, Dominique Voynet, ostentatiously drove up to the weekly cabinet meeting at the Elysée Palace in an electric car (also exempted). Atmospheric pollution fell dramatically. On Tuesday it exceeded 400 microgrammes of nitrogen dioxide per cubic metre of air, breaching for the first time the third level - "severe danger to public health" - laid down by a new law on air pollution introduced in January. Nitrogen dioxide is produced almost entirely by vehicle exhausts; it is produced in the

greatest quantity by diesels, which represent one in four vehicles in the Paris area. France now recognises that it is paying heavily for a policy of encouraging diesel cars, and subsidising diesel fuel: a policy introduced in the 1980s in the mistaken belief that diesel engines were less dirty.

Ms Voynet said the regulations had worked well but a longer-term strategy was needed. She called for tighter EU standards on car exhausts and the development of electric cars. The health minister, Bernard Kouchner, said there

should be permanent traffic restrictions in Paris, including a ban on tourist coaches.

Neither mentioned the one possible measure which might have a sharp effect: increasing the low level of tax on diesel fuel. Such a move was considered by the government this summer but shelved for fear of upsetting drivers and damaging French car-makers, still heavily committed to diesel engines.

A thousand police officers were deployed at checkpoints around and within the city. Offending motorists were warned that, next time, they faced a £100 fine. Favourite excuses included the claim that the car had an "odd" number because it started with one, or because it carried the number 75, the number which ends all Parisian car registrations.

The Metro was crowded but a Dunkirk spirit reigned. On personal observation, passengers were unusually polite to one another and almost chatty.

The Communist trade union federation, the CGT, refused to abandon a one-day, partial strike, called to demand more investment in public transport. The CGT decided, for strategic reasons, that it should apply to ticket sellers and checkers. Over half of them stayed at home. But since travel was free anyway ...

Satellite pictures, page 11

Noah's flood may have begun in the Black Sea

The Bible story of Noah and the Ark may have had a real basis, scientists have discovered. But it was not the world that was devastated - it was early farmers around the Black Sea.

Researchers have discovered evidence that the area was overwhelmed by an enormous deluge roughly 7,000 years ago - 3,000 years before a Babylonian flood myth known as Gilgamesh, which in turn predated the Biblical myth by roughly a thousand years.

They reckon the flood was caused by the collapse of a huge "plug" of silt in the

Bosphorus channel separating the Black Sea - then a freshwater lake - from the Mediterranean. The scientists reckon the incoming water would have had the force of 200 Niegars, and made a roar that could be heard 60 miles away.

More than 60,000 square kilometres of land would have been flooded within a few months. People displaced by the flood could have returned to Mesopotamia, with an apocalyptic tale that became a legend first for Babylonians and then the Hebrews.

The key to the flood was the end of the last Ice Age about 10,000 years ago, when

the first farmers began spreading from the Middle East. Ocean levels would have been lower than today due to water trapped in glaciers and the colder oceans.

Bill Ryan and Walt Pitman of New York's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory wondered told *New Scientist* magazine, "As the glaciers melted and the sea level rose, the ocean might have come pouring through. At first it might have been just a trickle, but pretty soon it would have cut a pretty deep channel and come rushing in [to the Black Sea]."

Charles Arthur, Science Editor

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Directors tell why Hollywood could end up a lost world



Focus of anger: Martin Scorsese with Sharon Stone (left) on the set of *Casino*, and Spike Lee (right), who hit out at Rupert Murdoch, saying that soon he would 'own everything in the whole world - next year'.

Photographs: Ronald Grant Archive



Overpaid actors, interfering studios and the threat of Rupert Murdoch. Some of Hollywood's best-known directors have spilled the beans. David Lister, arts news editor, reports on friction in Tinseltown

They are among the biggest and richest characters in the world of movies. But they have revealed themselves to be frustrated, fractious and

despondent about the future of the film industry, and fed up with the funny money being paid to Hollywood's biggest stars.

They also admit that it is nigh impossible to make an artistically satisfying mid-budget film which does not have a big star or a merchandising spin off.

Hollywood directors including Martin Scorsese, Oliver Stone, Robert Altman, Barry Levinson and Spike Lee hit out in a round-table discussion for this month's edition of *Premiere* magazine.

The comments are un-

usually frank and spare neither employers nor employees. Nora Ephron, director of *Sleepless In Seattle*, accused the studios of "cheating everybody with accounting." She says: "The accounting on *Sleepless* is breathtaking. It grossed \$220m worldwide, cost \$21m, and is currently showing \$3m in profits. Total. We've had to audit them twice, and every check I have gotten from them cost me an astronomical amount in legal fees."

Barry Levinson (*Diner*, *Rain Man* and *Sleepers*) talks of the dominance of marketing,

saying: "The 30-second television spot is probably the most dominant element in the business today. If you were making *On The Waterfront* now, the executives would be thinking, My God, how in the world are we going to produce a 30-second spot? Does it have any kind of merchandising potential? Can it be a video game? Can it be a computer kind of game? As opposed to being a movie. So what you're getting now are more simplistic films that you can sell more easily."

Robert Altman (*The Player*, *Pret A Porter*) is enthusiastically

supportive and adds a swipe at Steven Spielberg. "This *Lost World*, I haven't seen it, but I haven't met anybody, even children, who doesn't think it's just dreadful. But everybody wants to go see the dinosaurs. So it's amusement park time. Listen, times are bad and getting worse. And I don't think it's going to get any better. You know, there's not going to be any renaissance."

And *Makohl X* director Spike Lee demonstrates either inside knowledge or an advanced degree of paranoia when he says: "What is an in-

dependent film nowadays? With Miramax owned by Disney and now October bought by Universal, all the little people are being gobbled up... Eventually Mr Murdoch [Rupert Murdoch, head of 20th Century Fox and News International] he's going to own everything in the whole world—next year! Not just the next three years, but next year."

However, the greatest breaking of Hollywood ranks comes in the directors' attack on the fat salaries being paid to the acting stars.

The table of actors' fees per

picture in *Premiere* shows that Tom Cruise can now command \$20m per picture (compared to just \$2m 10 years ago). Harrison Ford and John Travolta are also in the \$20m league, Demi Moore \$14m, Julia Roberts and Sigourney Weaver \$13m, Eddie Murphy \$16m, Meryl Streep \$8m and Goldie Hawn \$5m.

Asked why costs have escalated so rapidly and so wildly, Oliver Stone responds: "Because of a lot of second-tier actors who are asking \$12m for a picture. It's absurd. I think actors are mostly pigging out,

frankly. Over the years I've been offered the big movies, but I never took the money like that. Scorsese adds: "The problem is if you're going to pay an actor \$20m, they're going to do something that's tried-and-true, very conservative material. He has to go through the ABCD route of the plot, and it's got to be action-adventure. And he's got to be able to come out okay at the end. And the bad guy's got to get killed in special ways. Nobody's going to take any chances. You've just got to top the one that came out six months before."

Microsoft makes first move into British PC market

The battle for supremacy in the personal computer market is intensifying with the high street electrical chain Dixons about to start selling a PC branded with the famous Microsoft name. Michael Harrison reports.

In two weeks' time, a personal computer will go on sale in Britain that not only runs on Microsoft software but also carries the Microsoft brand. This is not the first time that Microsoft has lent its name to a PC—it has carried out similar experiments before, twice in the United States and once in Poland.

But this will be the first time it has happened in Britain, and the computer industry expects it to generate a great deal of interest. Microsoft, founded by the legendary Bill Gates, is teaming up with Viglen Technology, the company that rose from the ashes of Alan Sugar's Amstrad, to market the new

range of PCs. The Viglen HomePro Microsoft range will be aimed squarely at first-time buyers and will be available throughout 250 Dixons, Currys and PC World stores.

Microsoft long since grew into the world's biggest software producer, outstripping rivals such as Lotus and Word Perfect. But now it sees an opportunity to drive home its dominance even further.

David Svendsen, managing director of Microsoft Limited, says: "It marks an important step in the way we are able to reach our customers who need software for use in the home. By working with Viglen Technology we can introduce customers to our top titles and begin to have a longer relationship."

The Viglen-Microsoft PC is being manufactured at a purpose built factory in Alperston, west London and output is projected to reach 50,000 in the next year. It will sell for between £1,599 and £3,500 and will be ready to run on Microsoft's Windows 98 when that is launched.

The deal represents a UK

first for Microsoft, but it also marks a change in strategy for Viglen, which is now the country's biggest manufacturers of PCs and has, until now, supplied direct to customers.

When Amstrad acquired Viglen three years ago it also stopped selling its computers through high street stores, exasperated at the margins retailers demanded and switched to direct sales. Now, however, Viglen is renewing its relationship with the retailers who still account for two-thirds of all computers sold.

The way computers are sold is rapidly changing. Earlier this week, PC World launched a direct sales operation while the computer manufacturer Compaq has also started selling direct. Meanwhile one of the big players in the PC-direct market, Tidy, has opened some UK retail stores.

Bordan Tkachuk, Viglen's chief executive, says: "If we can get a foot in both camps we can sell to the first time buyer who prefers to shop in the high street and the experienced user who is more at ease buying direct."

Virtual reality makes theatre booking just the ticket

No more paying through the nose for what turn out to be lousy seats at the theatre. Instead, customers will soon be able to "scout out" venues in advance, roaming through three dimensional virtual reality seating charts to take their pick of the choicest spots.

America's leading ticket ordering service, Ticketmaster, has teamed up with Intel to develop the technology to take the risk out of advance booking. A new online service to be launched next spring will offer buyers "point of view" ordering—a chance to see how close seats are to the stage.

The system will be linked to Ticketmaster's existing Web

site, Ticketmaster Online. With over 1.3 million users every month, it is already one of the most frequently hit sites in the US. "The success of Ticketmaster Online, which now sells over \$3m worth of tickets per month, inspired the creation of this new service, which will help us meet the growing demand for computer-based ticketing," said Fredric Rosen, president and chief executive officer.

Work is currently under way on producing sophisticated 3D virtual interiors of theatres, concert halls and stadiums around the country. Ticketmaster hopes to co-operate with Intel to create represen-

tations of venues the length and breadth of the United States.

In addition to virtual reality graphics, a range of services will be on offer to subscribers, including listings and entertainment news. Everything from Broadway shows to sporting events and rock concerts will be covered, said Ticketmaster.

A Web site for the UK is currently in the pipeline, and the Los Angeles office is co-operating with London staff to develop an Internet ticketing service which will augment the existing call centre by the end of this winter. This follows the successful development of a similar site in Australia earlier this year. — Tim Large

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'Searchlight' founder jailed for stealing from clients

In fact, Labour's lengthy opposition to the annually renewable Act – which allows police to arrest people and question them for up to seven days without charge – was reversed last year when Jack Straw, then shadow home secretary, and Tony Blair recommended for the first time in 15 years that Labour MPs abstain. But the concession came just a fortnight after the IRA bombed Canary Wharf, and a counter-



"No matter how severe the problems of cashflow, no solicitor has the right to keep his practice afloat at the expense of his clients," Judge Bathurst-Norman said.

The UK's clearing banks and building societies have 97 million cards in circulation at present, all with expiry dates in the next couple of years. — Charles Arthur

It would strengthen the arguments of those academics who believe that external Barbarian attacks on Roman Britain started in the late third century AD rather than three generations later in the mid fourth. — David Keys

**'John Lawton is definitely
a man to watch'**

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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Spiritual leader of
 Hamas released
 from prison

Israel yesterday pardoned Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas, the Islamic militant organisation.

King Hussein of Jordan asked for his release, reportedly in exchange for two Israeli intelligence agents. Patrick Cockburn, in Jerusalem, examines the deal behind Sheikh Yassin's release.

Early yesterday morning the frail figure of 61-year-old Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, unable to move his limbs and almost stone deaf, was carried on a stretcher from his prison in Israel where he has been since 1989, to a Jordanian military helicopter, which flew him to Amman where he was met by King Hussein.

An Israeli statement said that he was being released to

foster the peace process. In fact Israeli sources say he owes his freedom primarily to a botched Israeli attempt to assassinate a Hamas leader in Jordan, which enraged King Hussein.

On arrival in Amman Sheikh Yassin, who in 1988 founded Hamas, responsible for the suicide bomb attacks which have done much to derail peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, sounded more coherent than expected. Speaking by phone to reporters in Gaza he said: "We salute you and all the Palestinian people in the occupied land and, God willing, we will meet soon on our own soil."

If Sheikh Yassin does return to Gaza, which can only be done with Israel's permission, his presence will make it more difficult for Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, to deal harshly with Hamas. The exact state of his health is unclear. Musa Abu Marzook, another Hamas leader, said Sheikh Yassin had been on hunger strike for the last five days. He said: "Israel always exports its

problems and I think it wants to export the health problem of Sheikh Yassin."

At first Sheikh Yassin's wife Halima cried on hearing the news of his release, saying: "This deportation is an order of separation between him and his family." However Mr Marzook, a senior Hamas leader, said Jordan would not have accepted Sheikh Yassin unless his transfer was a stepping stone in his return to Gaza.

Sheikh Yassin founded Hamas - the name is an acronym of the Islamic Resistance Movement - in 1988 at the start of the Palestinian Intifada as a wing of the long-established Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine. The organisation only shifted to military action slowly in 1992 and in 1994 began, through its military branch, Izzedine al-Qassam, to launch its first suicide bomb attacks. Before the Palestinian Intifada Israel encouraged Islamic fundamentalists like Sheikh Yassin in the hope of weakening secular nationalists like Yasser Arafat, the leader of the PLO.

Mossad's bungle
leads to Israel losing
captured prize

Last Thursday, two men on Canadian passports tried to assassinate a Hamas leader in Jordan. King Hussein believes that the attackers belong to Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency.

Patrick Cockburn reports that the failed assassination appears to have led directly to the release of Sheikh Yassin.

It all began at 7.15am on 25 September in the Hila El-Ali district of Amman, the Jordanian capital, when Khalid Meshal, the head of the political bureau of Hamas, was entering a building which contains his office. He was accompanied by three of his seven children and his bodyguards.

In the entrance, two men approached him and one stepped forward swiftly and touched him with what is described as "an apparatus" on the chest. Mr Meshal screamed with pain and fell to the ground. His bodyguards attacked the two men, smashing the glasses of one of them. But they were unable to prevent them driving away in a Hyundai, said to contain three other men.

The bodyguards pursued and more than a mile away came across the assailants, apparently changing cars. There was a fight in which one of the men who attacked Mr Meshal was hurt. Surprisingly no shots were fired by either side. The Jordanian police arrested all involved in the fracas.

In the police station it emerged that the two men under arrest carried Canadian passports and has been staying in the Intercontinental, a luxury hotel in the centre of Amman. Two other Canadians who were staying with them did not return to the hotel, abandoning their luggage, and may have been the other men in the car. When Canadian embassy officials visited the two prisoners in jail they said they wanted no diplomatic assistance. The

names of the Canadians have not been released.

Meanwhile, Mr Meshal had been removed to hospital. Dr Abdel Aziz Rantisi, the Hamas leader in Gaza, told *The Independent* that at the time of the attack: "Meshal felt noises in his ears, then after two hours drowsiness, nausea and vomiting. In hospital he began to feel respiratory failure which turned to suffocation so he had to be put on a respirator. We believe they wanted to kill him, but make it look as if he died naturally."

Earlier this week, a furious King Hussein of Jordan is reported to have telephoned Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, demanding to know what kind of nerve gas was used by Israeli agents on Mr Meshal so the correct antidote could be administered by Jordanian doctors.

Israel has neither admitted nor denied being behind the assassination bid, but Israeli radio reports that last Sunday Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan visited Israel to arrange an exchange of Sheikh Yassin for the two captured Mossad agents.

On Monday, Dr Rantisi told *The Independent* that Hamas viewed the attack on Mr Meshal, if it was confirmed that it was carried out by Israeli agents, as did the assassination of Yahyah Ayyash. Both actions called for revenge by Hamas against Israel. In retaliation for the killing of Ayyash four suicide bombers killed 58 people. By releasing Sheikh Yassin, Israel will hope to pacify King Hussein, prevent more Hamas bombs and avert the danger of Sheikh Yassin dying in Israeli custody. Hamas said he had gone on hunger strike some days ago.

Denying a deal with Israel, Samir Mutawae, the Jordanian information minister, said that the two Canadians would be put on trial. If Mossad was involved then the attempted assassination of Mr Meshal will be most disastrous incident in its history. Given that the Prime Minister would probably have authorised such an operation there will also be damage to Mr Netanyahu's reputation.



A picture of Sheikh Yassin taken in his prison cell in December last year

AFP

PRISON LEAGUE

Israel holds 3,648 Palestinian prisoners, according to Israeli figures. Since signing the framework peace accord with the PLO in September 1993, it has freed 7,544 Palestinians.

This is a breakdown of prisoners released by Israel as confidence-building measures or in fulfilment of peace deals.

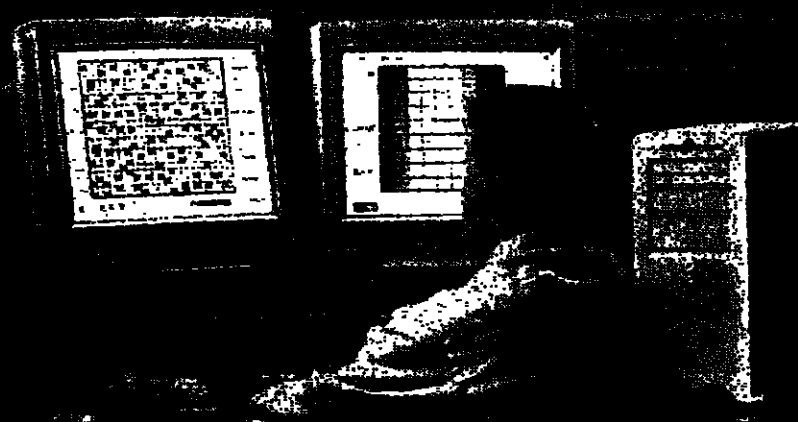
- 700 freed by January 1994 as a confidence building measure after the framework peace deal and ahead of further talks.

- 4,900 by mid-June 1994 in fulfilment of a provision in the May 4, 1994, agreement setting up self-rule in most of the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

- 1,000 in October 1995, fulfilling the first stage release called for in the September 1995 West Bank deal.

- 913 ahead of Palestinian elections in January 1996 which, according to Israel, fulfilled the second stage release called for in the West Bank deal.

- 30 women prisoners in February 1996 in partial fulfilment of the Hebron deal.

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8/LABOUR CONFERENCE

Prescott stands firm on privatised rail network

John Prescott had the task of heading off a conference vote in favour of nationalising Railtrack. Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, saw the Deputy Prime Minister in vintage form.

John Prescott warned the two rail unions pushing for nationalisation that it would cost £4.5bn of taxpayers' money that would be better spent on rail services and hospitals.

"I can't in all honesty go to the Cabinet and ask them to treat this purchase as a priority next year, over hospitals, or even railway safety," he said.

He also tore up the Tories' franchising rules in a dramatic gesture on the platform, and announced he was introducing new rules, which could allow public operators to run railway services for the first time since privatisation.

The change in the rules could allow the British Rail Board for the first time to bid for the franchises when they end after seven years, or if they are surrendered by private companies running into financial difficulty as the £2bn-a-year subsidies are phased out.

But Mr Prescott's main task was to head off the alliance of Jimmy Knapp's RMT union and Aslef, led by Lew Adams, to commit the Labour Government to returning Railtrack into public ownership "early within its first term of office". There was warm applause for speakers who supported the move, but Mr Prescott per-

sued the unions to remit the motion, with a promise that he would return to next year's conference with plans for returning the railways to public control by a variety of routes, which are expected to fall short of direct ownership.

Mr Prescott said taking Railtrack into public ownership would put half a million pounds in the pockets of the company's directors, including its chairman, Sir Robert Horton, and other board members who included Archie Norman, the Asda chief, now a Tory MP and vice-chairman of the Conservative Party.

"I don't believe you really want me to use public money next year to make fat cats even fatter," he said.

The Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions also assured the conference that he had rejected wholesale privatisation of London Underground, but in a clear signal the Government would go for partial privatisation, he said he wanted to bring in some private capital to modernise the Tube system. "£7bn of investment to modernise our London Underground will involve some hard decisions," he added.

The debate also heard appeals for tougher action on countering pollution. Michael Meacher, the environment minister, said a new worldwide understanding was needed on global warming. Welcoming his remarks, Friends of the Earth said he had failed to explain whether the action promised by Britain, to reduce CO2 emissions by 20 per cent by 2010 was conditional on action by other countries.



Gown and out: Protesters against student loans with petitions outside the conference hall

Photograph: Brian Harris

Minimum wage to be lower for younger workers

Peter Mandelson announced that the national minimum wage be lower for younger workers. Barrie Clement, Labour Editor, watched the minister without portfolio bounce back into controversy.

John Monks, TUC leader, described the plan to apply a lower national minimum wage to the under-25s as "dynamite". Speaking on a platform with Pe-

ter Mandelson, Mr Monks warned against the proposal which he believes would alienate new voters in the next election.

After the fringe meeting, he said that many young workers had children and a full range of adult responsibilities and therefore needed to be covered by statutory adult pay rates.

Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, last week sent a memorandum to the Low Pay Commission which will advise the Cabinet on a national minimum wage, asking it to "consider" a lower rate

for those under the age of 25. In his speech to the meeting on the relationship between unions and government, Mr Mandelson said that a different statutory minimum "will" apply to the young.

Later, Mr Mandelson, who on Monday failed to win a seat on the National Executive Committee, tried to draw the sting from his remarks.

He said the Government did not wish to see the policy provide a "disincentive" for young people to stay on in education and training or to restrict employment opportunities.

"Therefore we have asked the Commission to consider carefully this area."

He said that whatever "interpretation" had been placed on his remarks, it was up to the Commission to make recommendations on lower rates or exemptions for young people.

The TUC believes that the statutory minimum should be applied to all "fully trained" adults and is calling for the rate to be struck at more than £4 an hour. Yesterday some ministers were indicating that the limit might be £3.85.

Crime statistics overhaul

A fundamental overhaul of the way the official crime statistics are calculated was announced yesterday by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary. Addressing a Police Federation fringe meeting, Mr Straw said the new system of counting would produce a more accurate picture of true crime levels.

The changes, the first since 1980, are expected to lead to higher overall figures, reflecting more closely the findings of the Independent British Crime Survey.

The previous system, based on crime recorded by police, was criticised for the way a string of offences committed by an offender could end up being counted as just one crime.

Mr Straw said the new system would be broadly based on the principle of "one crime per victim" - equating the number of crimes recorded to the number of victims.

He said the twice yearly publication dates would be set according to a fixed formula, ending the scope for ministers to manipulate their publication for political advantage.

SEEN & HEARD

Tony Banks, the Sports Minister, was forced to apologise to William Hague, after he had called him a "foetus" at a fringe meeting. Having said that Conservative MPs had "elected a foetus as party leader", the outspoken minister then added: "I bet there's a lot of Tory MPs that wish they hadn't voted against abortion now."

Mr Banks said in a later statement: "This was a tasteless remark, uttered off the cuff, which I acknowledge caused offence and for which I fully apologise."

A Conservative Party spokesman said the remark had been "utterly distasteful". Sir Teddy Taylor, Conservative MP for Southend East and Rochford, said: "This is little more than saloon-bar vulgarity. If Mr Banks is going to bring back this kind of filthy and offensive language into British politics, it won't do anyone any good. At least Mr Hague is a gentleman."

"Charlie is the youngest person ever to address a Labour conference. All I can say is, 'William Hague, eat your heart out.' David Blunkett introducing Charlie Nobbs, an 11-year-old whose speech on his reading summer school beat Mr Hague, who addressed the Tory conference at 16, by five years."

Seen in the conference shop: Sets of mugs for £17.50, each bearing one of Labour's five election pledges. But "Waiting lists will be shorter" has mysteriously become "Treat more NHS patients." (see picture opposite)

Today's agenda:

- Robin Cook defends his ethical foreign policy against accusations that he has not been tough enough in applying it.
- Clare Short promises more money for landmine clearance in a debate on development issues.
- George Robertson advocates maintaining strong armed forces as delegates talk about defence issues.
- Jack Straw promises tough measures to tackle crime.

And on the fringe:

- Jack Straw debates the European Convention on Human Rights with the Law Society and Liberty.
- David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, talks about the way ahead for the Northern Ireland peace process.
- Frank Field, social security minister, talks about radical solutions to the pensions problem.
- Left Briefing holds its annual "politically incorrect" quiz with prizes and raffa.

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Pat. No. 12220

What if ... the Blair Project really works?

Tony Blair could be the first prime minister since Attlee to say what he means, mean what he says, and deliver what he promises. Our Political Editor analyses an entirely different style in Downing Street.

When Ulster Unionists go into Number 10 and berate the Prime Minister, as they tend to, Mr Blair takes it on the chin and then gets down to business.

He does not grin and bear it because that is his way; it is not. But it is one of the lessons he has learnt from John Major's mistakes. It does not help to react with anger, when what you are trying to do is calm things down.

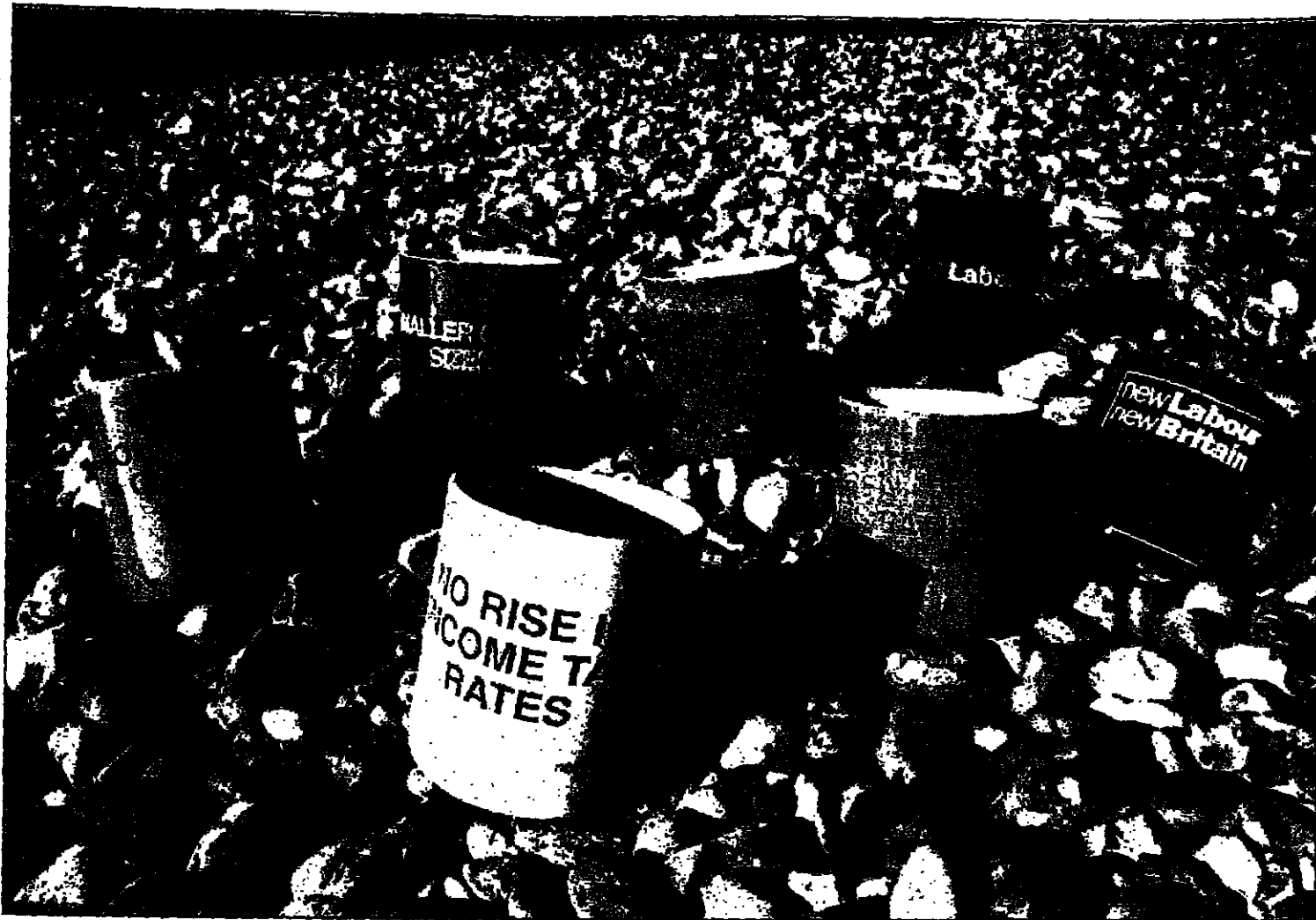
The application of intelligence to the process of government is very straightforward, but exceedingly rare. Mr Blair decides where he wants to go, looks at history and past mistakes, learns the lessons, and comes up with an answer. That answer is then reduced to a straightforward message, the means of delivery are decided, and the necessary action is taken to execute it.

The Northern Ireland talks process, Bank of England independence on interest rates, the devolution referendum votes are three prime examples of the process at work.

In the election, Mr Blair made a number of key promises for implementation during the course of the current, five-year Parliament. There was a time when John Major promised that he would not slap value-added tax on fuel; a devaluation of political promise that Mr Blair is determined not to repeat.

So what if class sizes are cut to 30 or under for 5-, 6-, and 7-year-olds? What if 250,000 under-25s can be switched from benefits to work? What if NHS waiting lists can be reduced by treating an extra 100,000 patients? Of course, that would make a difference to education, the economy, and the NHS.

They are changes that are designed as a first step on a rather more significant road - leading to a reform of the welfare state that leaves more of the middle classes looking after them-



Promises, promises: Ambitious, perhaps, but the Government's programme may yet be achievable

Photograph: Brian Harris

selves and their pensions; leading to a reform of the constitution that really could create a "21st century of the radicals", with the Tories out of office as much as Labour has been during the 20th century; leading to a return of a sense of community and social values, with a restoration of the family to its former glory.

All of that, and more, is on the long-term Blair agenda, to create "the model 21st century nation, a beacon to the world". Nothing will be allowed to get in the way. When Mr Blair and his colleagues come across an obstacle, they either dismantle it, blow it up, or go round it until it can be removed.

If policy is unpopular or impractical, it is dropped; if the unions get in the way, they are sidelined, if the House of Lords threatens to get in the

way, it will be "reformed", if the press needs to be on side, seduce the proprietors; and if civil servants are not on side, they will be shifted or "retired".

To the consternation of some officials, ministers have broken with de-

BY ANTHONY BEVINS

partmental loyalties, and they are actually working together, as a team, as they did in opposition, to achieve Labour's targets.

The Prime Minister's close cabinet colleagues, and his friends, say that the key to Mr Blair is his normality.

But in politics, normality is abnormal.

The natural way in which Mr Blair responded to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, is cited as an example of his instinctive approach, "tapping in" to the feelings and thoughts of the party, and population at large. It is no coincidence that he has been to more Brighton "fringe" meetings this week than any other leader for 30 years.

There, on the fringe, everywhere he goes, he listens. And when he talks, he does not need high drama, or shock-horror tactics to put his case; the message on education, health, welfare, employment, and crime is kept simple and straight. Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime was Mr Blair's first example of the art-form; not so much a sound bite as a policy meal.

But Mr Blair has another secret, too. He bites off no more than he can chew. He limits his promises to the things he can achieve, and he believes that if he delivers on the fundamentals, like education and health, people will accept any pain that might have to be taken on things like tuition fees and self-help welfare.

Mr Blair said on Tuesday: "On 1 May 1997, it wasn't just the Tories who were defeated. Cynicism was defeated."

There, he was wrong. There are still many people who do not believe he will deliver; that he will be like all the rest of the politicians: a man of broken promises, broken dreams. Mr Blair is determined to be different. If his track record is anything to go by, he could well succeed, and, then, only then, vanquish the cynics.

Castle's stand on pensions fails to dent party leadership

Barbara Castle took the conference by storm yesterday with an attack on the leadership over pensions which won a standing ovation but left policy unchanged. Other potential conflicts were defused.

Fran Abrams says the leadership now looks certain to finish its third consecutive conference without a single defeat.

tion not only from the delegates but also from the Secretary of State for Social Security, Harriet Harman.

She urged delegates to stop the basic state pension "withering on the vine" and cast doubt on the validity of the advice the government would receive in its ongoing pensions review. "Who, in the end, will they listen to? Because I'm damned if I am going to hand my social conscience over to the man from the Pru," she said.

The endorsement of plans to charge graduates £1,000 for each year of their university education marked a victory for the Education and Employment Secretary, David Blunkett. The support of Labour Students for his plans put the final nail in the coffin of protests within the party.

But Maria Exall of the Communication Workers' Union said charging fees would deter many working class students from going to university.

"Yes, we need a modern education system but on this issue we say clearly, 'Tony, you are wrong,'" she said.

Despite talk earlier in the week of a knife-edge vote on student fees, none happened. The story was similar on other controversial issues.

Calls for the Government to abandon plans to cut benefits for single parents also came to nothing after a decision was taken not to hold a full debate.



Stirring: Barbara Castle's speech won a standing ovation

Britain takes leading role in drive to eradicate landmines

Ministers will today announce a two-pronged initiative on landmines. After a ban on new British mines and its support for moves to do the same worldwide, the Government is now promising new funds to help with clearance work. Fran Abrams reports

Tribute will be paid at the conference today to the work of the Princess of Wales against landmines as ministers reveal details of their own latest initiatives.

The move by George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, and Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, marks a recognition that there is still a long way to go on the issue.

Mr Robertson will announce the creation of a new centre to provide information and training on landmines. He will give fuller details later this month. The centre will be run by the Ministry of Defence, but it will be used by charities and mine clearance groups as well as academics. It will provide advice and assistance to organisations such as the Red Cross as well as the Halo Trust and the Mines Advisory Group, which do mine clearance work.

Mr Robertson will say: "The British army is among the world's leaders in military demining, and in Bosnia and elsewhere it has demonstrated that its skills and experience can be applied in support of humanitarian demining operations as well. I intend to build on that by increasing the assistance which the Army gives to those involved."

Although the British army is not equipped or trained for humanitarian demining, as opposed to the kind carried out in battle to allow troops through, Mr Robertson believes his department could do more to help. However, the new centre will concentrate on giving advice and assistance to others rather

than involving British soldiers directly in the work.

Ms Short will announce in her speech to the conference that the £5m her department spends on humanitarian demining projects will be doubled to £10m over the next three years.

She will also announce a new forestry project in Indonesia which will signal the direction that her department intends to take over supplying aid to that country.

In the past, Britain has concentrated more of its aid on infrastructure programmes, often through the controversial Aid and Trade programme. It is hoped that in future more of the poorer people in Indonesia will feel the benefit.

FROM THE FLOOR: CHERRY MOSTESHAR

Tony and Peter's religious police would do Iran proud

"Education, education, education" whatever became of you? David Blunkett's standing ovation yesterday was by no means unanimous after the opposition to university tuition fees crumbled and, some will say, university students were sold down the river.

My apologies to all the students on whose doorstep I stood and promised that there was no way the party's rank and file would allow a Labour government to charge them. Yes, there were some excellent promises made by the Secretary of State for Education yesterday, things that will give all children a real chance in life, but it left a hole at the top of the education pyramid. I have to say that I was not the only one gagging when Mr Blunkett, living on his ministerial salary, used his children as prime examples of British youth.

I'm not even considering resigning from the party this time; once those sentiments hit the news stand tomorrow Labour may well believe it has enough evidence of real disloyalty to kick me out.

Please Prime Minister, and Secre-

tary of State, stop exploiting children for your political ends. During the leader's speech even an old cynic such as me was enthused; that is until Tony did the "letter" thing. Then came dear sweet Charlie whose address to conference surely deserved a better reward than *How Green is my Valley* - I know what I would have done with that admittedly great book if it had been handed to me at the age of 11.

But not everybody was unhappy yesterday afternoon. It was a great day for Oxford University as it saw the trade of brown-nosing by the speaker from Cambridge University go horribly wrong as he ended up opposing the motion he was supposed to support. Meanwhile, we dangerous radicals - the pensioners and me - are locked in a battle to bring down Western democracy - yes we are the anti-Trident lobby, and I am due to propose the abolition motion today.

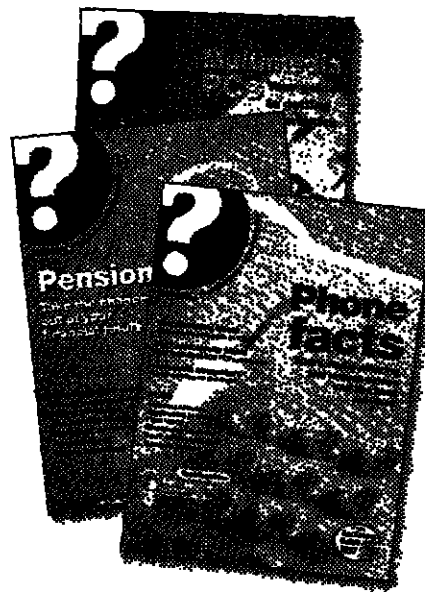
We make no apology for preferring to see £1.2bn a year for 20 years being redirected from a mostly redundant weapon system to a decent pension for those who protected us in

the last war, and schools that don't crumble round the ears of the generation destined to live in the future that we are supposedly protecting with nuclear weapons.

Abolition of Trident has become a cause célèbre among the fine ladies of the Brighton Hove & District Pensioners Association, one militant told me: "We fought the last war, we don't want another one. Let's have the money off Trident spent on caring for the human race."

I am not one who is easily intimidated, but Tuesday was the longest day of my life as I dodged party officials angry about this column. Quite an admission for a woman labelled a maverick by Ayatollah Khomeini, Iran's spiritual leader.

Given the choice of appearing before a judge of the Islamic courts of Iran, or going off into the den of the Mandelsteins, Tehran wins every time. At least with Judge Babai I had an occasional giggle and an unspoken understanding that we were going through the motions. Come back Rafsanjani all is forgiven.

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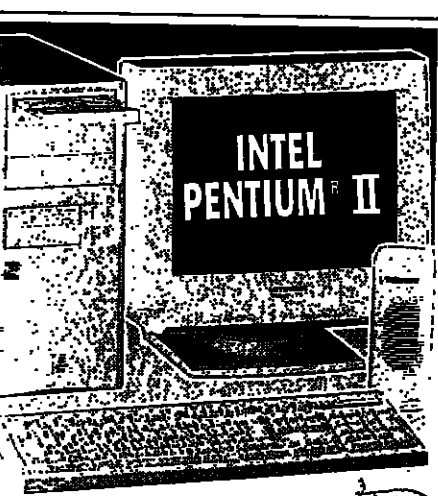


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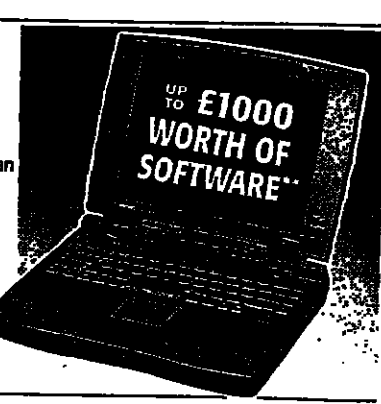
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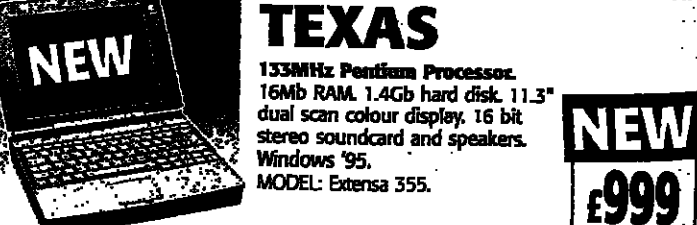
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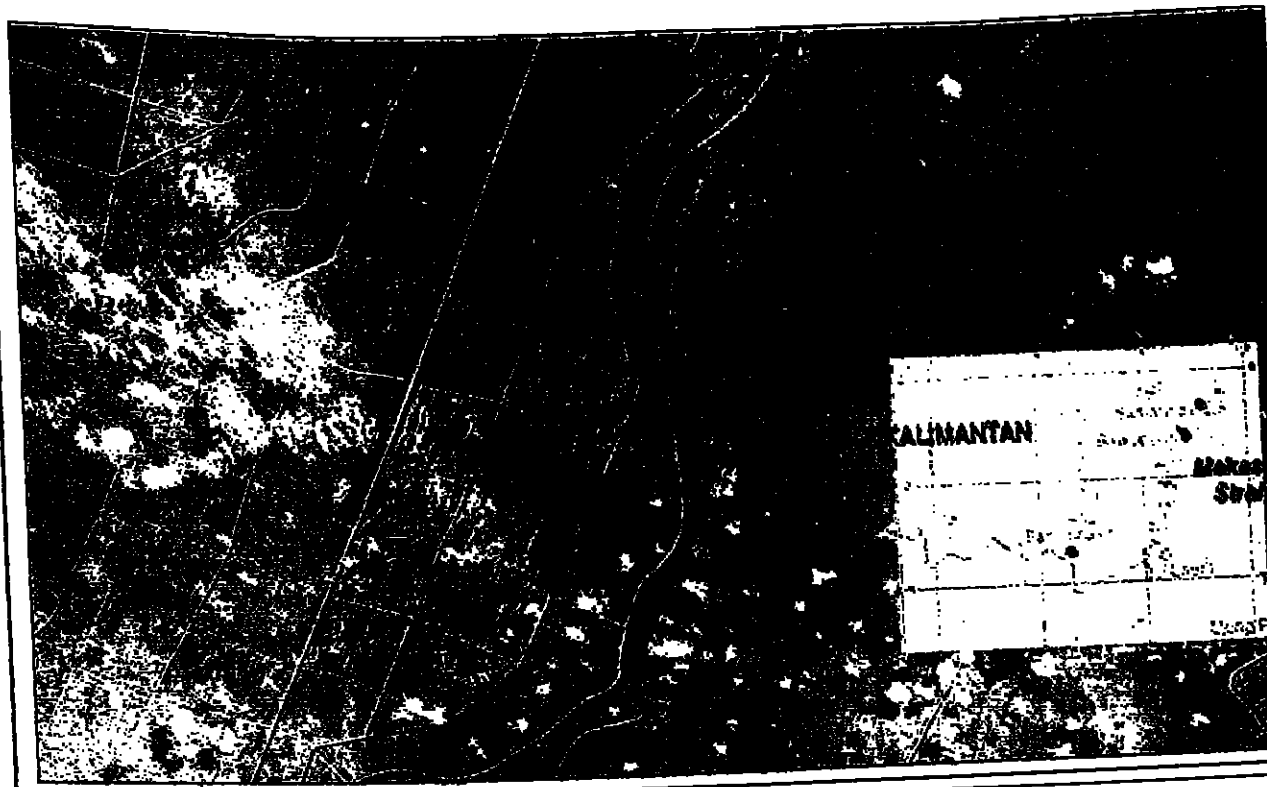
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Satellite pictures that show how forest fires were started to clear land for farmers



Singapore's leading newspaper used these colour photos yesterday to make one simple point: "Indonesia's forest fires are no accident or act of nature," the daily *Straits Times* said.

The photos show that forests were being cleared to make way for plantations, with fire employed as the means of getting rid of the natural vegetation. They also show the fires continuing into September, by which time the smog had hit health-damaging levels.

The red areas are jungle; the green areas are clear plantation land. The artificial colouring makes it easier to see the pattern of events.

The main picture shows the area when the fires first started, with small

puffs of smoke across the area demonstrating that the fires had multiple sources.

The second picture (above left) shows the fires raging, with smoke drifting across the area. The third picture shows that the burnt area has been cleared, and is being used as farmland.

The pictures, taken by the National University of Singapore (NUS) Centre for Remote Imaging Sensing and Processing, can pinpoint the fires to 10 or 20 metres. "By just looking at the photographs, Indonesian authorities should be able to tell who owns a piece of land which has been cleared by fire, or from which plumes of smoke rise," the *Times* said.

Smog-hit states point the finger at Indonesia

As forest fires continue to burn across Indonesia, there is growing anger at the country's apparent collusion in one of the world's biggest ever environmental disasters.

The satellite photographs above clearly show that, far from being accidental, many of the fires have been deliberately started by landowners as a means of clearing jungle for plantations. Richard Lloyd Parry weighs the accusations.

Smoke from fires on the islands of Sumatra and Borneo has blanketed the region since the summer, disrupting transport, industry and causing health problems in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, the Philippines, and Thailand. Until last weekend, the Malaysian state of Sarawak, in the north-west of Borneo, was under a state of emergency, and the haze is believed to have contributed to an air crash which killed 234 people in Sumatra last week, and to at least three collisions between ships in the busy Straits of Malacca.

A fortnight ago, President Suharto of Indonesia apologised for the fires, and unveiled measures to crack down on companies which violate a ban on forest burning. Since then, however, Indonesian plantation companies and his ministers have continued to insist that the disaster is natural in origin, caused by a prolonged drought and the meteorological phenomenon known as El Nino.

"The country cannot be held responsible for a natural disaster. We cannot be sued," said the minister for people's welfare, Azwar Anas, on Sunday. "All experts in the world have said that this catastrophe is not only a natural disaster concerning Indonesia or one resulting from the actions of Indonesians, but it is a global disaster."

But these photographs, published yesterday in the Singapore newspaper *Straits Times*, show that many of the fires are being started deliberately for financial gain.

As fellow members of the Association of South-east Asian Nations (Asean), the stricken countries take pride in their non-confrontational approach to regional differences. But, according to diplomats and officials, the facade of harmony may be cracking as Indonesia's neighbours take account of the huge cost of the fires.

The *Straits Times*, which openly defers to the views of the Singaporean government, published an editorial this week criticising Mr Anas and his government. "The patience of Singaporeans and Malaysians is

wearing thin," it said. "The cost of the haze is getting unacceptably high and it will get higher if not enough Indonesian officials act urgently, decisively. [The fires] are all of South-east Asia's business now."

The Malaysian environment minister, Law Heng Ding, announced that he intends to "inform" Jakarta of the financial costs of the smog crisis. "It has caused inconveniences and brought about undue worry to the people," he said. "The people's daily lives were disrupted. Sarawak has lost millions of ringgit when it was put under a state of emergency."

"They're hinting that they want some kind of payment in kind," says a western diplomat in Kuala Lumpur. "The government is feeling far more pissed off than it is letting on."

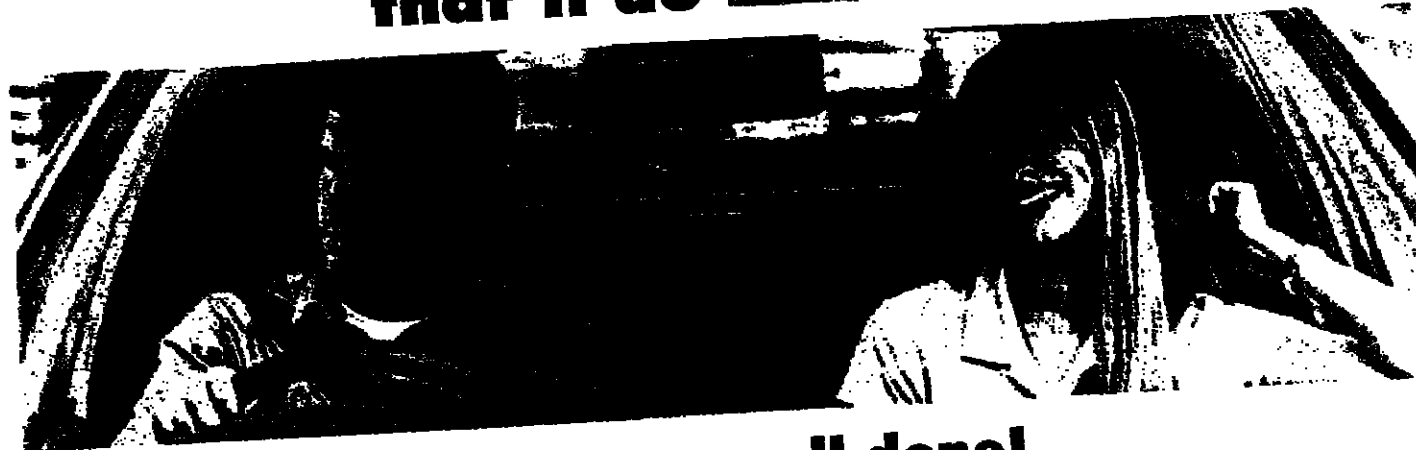
Responsibility for the disaster is complicated by the fact that several of the plantation companies believed to be guilty of burning in Sumatra are Malaysian and Singaporean. The cleared land is used to cultivate palm oil, a lucrative commodity which can be harvested continually and which is in increasing demand worldwide for margarine. The Indonesian government itself has announced plans to double oil palm plantations to 5.5 million hectares by 2000. In forest areas where roads are few and poor, the only cheap and practicable way to clear felled trees is to burn them.

In Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, yesterday the Air Pollution Index was at safe levels of less than 100, after soaring to a record 839 last week. But there is concern about the long-term effects of exposure to the smog, and subdued resentment at the attitudes of the Indonesian government.

Sarawak has suffered serious smoke pollution before, in 1982, 1990, 1991 and 1994, although never on the scale of the last few weeks. "There will be effects on lungs and an increase in chronic bronchitis," said a doctor at Kuching's Normah Medical Centre yesterday. "As for cancer, no one knows. We won't know for 10 or 20 years."

A team of Japanese environmental experts arrived in Kuching yesterday. Several other countries have offered financial or technical assistance, including firemen from France and £100,000 from Britain. But there is cynicism about the timing of the relief effort.

"Why wait until now to allow in firefighters from neighbouring countries?" asks a retired government official in Kuching. "The answer is that the job is done now. The trees have cleared the land for cultivation, and now all they need to do is douse the embers. This is what the people in the know are saying, although they cannot say it publicly: it was deliberate. The Indonesians knew what was happening and they let it happen out of greed."

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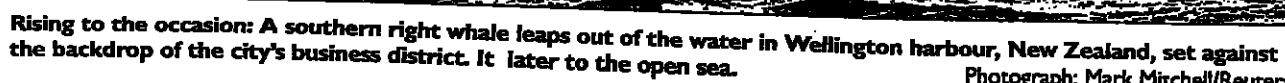
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DRIVEN BY PASSION **FIAT**

15.

But Tsering Wangial, 45, interviewed at a tuberculosis hospital

● **New Delhi (AP)** — Two bombs exploded in a bustling old quarter of the Indian capital yesterday, injuring 16 people. The explosions occurred in the crowded Sadar Bazar area, where many of the city's wholesale markets are located. The bombs were placed on the roadside and were not powerful. Most of the injured were pedestrians and shoppers thronging the area. The crowds are larger at this time of the year because of major Hindu festivals in October. In July, blasts in the same area had injured 12 people. No one claimed responsibility for those blasts, but Muslim and Sikh separatists have been blamed for previous explosions.



The Commission's proposals, which controversially call for member states to judge each others' job-creation performance, come ahead of next month's special EU leaders' employment summit. But they set the scene for open confrontation at that meeting between on the one hand those, such as the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who believe

Padraig Flynn, the EU social affairs commissioner who framed the details said "The time has come to set targets and

British officials said the key to tackling the EU's unemployment ills rested in flexible labour markets and adaptable workforces while maintaining "decent" minimum standards at work.

Mr Prodi told union leaders earlier that his majority was in jeopardy after the Refoundation refused to back his 1998 budget, which the government considers essential to secure Italy's membership of the single European currency. The hard-left party, which has ensured Mr Prodi's majority in the lower Chamber of Deputies, says the budget contains unacceptable cuts in welfare and pensions. Without its backing, he may not be able to get his budget passed and his 17-month-old government would be at risk.

"The Secretary-General has decided to withdraw the UN human rights team for consultations pending final clarification from the government on its policy," spokesman Fred Eckhard told reporters. "The team in Kinshasa has been unable to carry out its mandate." — AP

Those watching his television broadcast said the 54-year-old infantry general looked tired and seemed to have lost weight, but did not appear to be at death's door with cirrhosis of the liver, as opposition publications had claimed.

— Reuters

Bill Clinton is seeking so-called fast-track negotiating authority to expand the North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico to other countries in Latin America and beyond. He has been criticised for emphasising trade agreements over worker rights and the environment. — AP

The revised code is intended to take effect 1 January next year and follows international criticism of curbs on the media in the former Yugoslav republic. Lack of media freedom was one of the reasons cited by the Council of Europe when it delayed Croatia's admission for several months last year.

— Reuters

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Milosevic plays hardball as unrest grows in Serbia

Slobodan Milosevic is on the offensive again. On Tuesday night the wily Yugoslav President engineered the sacking of the most popular of his opponents as mayor of Belgrade.

Yesterday, his riot police broke up a peaceful demonstration in the tense southern province of Kosovo.

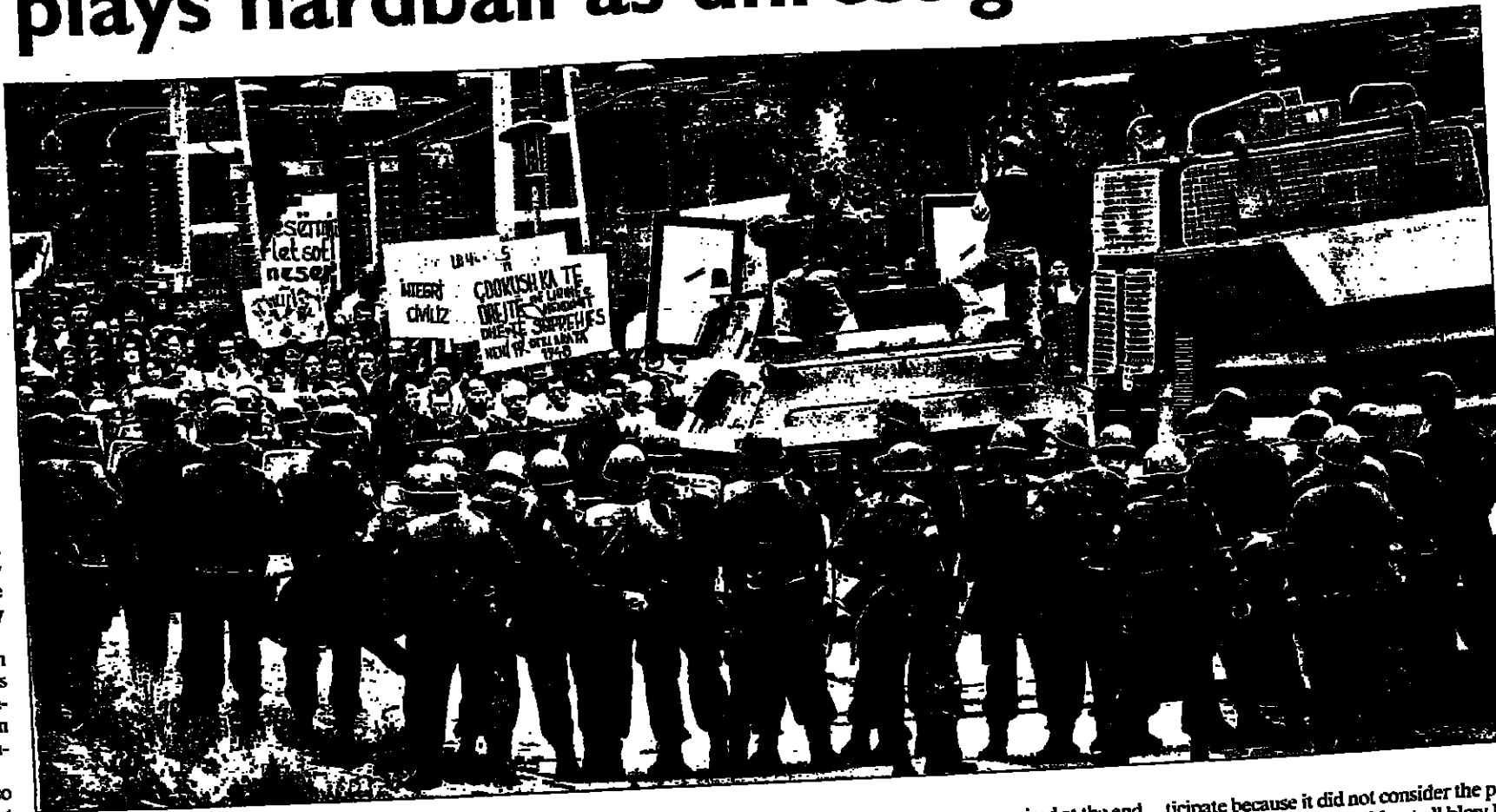
But, as Andrew Gumbel reports, this tough line is a high-risk strategy.

It was not so much a sacking as a coup. The Belgrade City Council meeting that voted to dismiss Zoran Djindjic on Tuesday night was called without the consent of the mayor of Belgrade and was boycotted by his Democratic Party.

What had, for seven fragile months, been a beacon of democracy in Mr Milosevic's autocratic Serbia suddenly turned into a cabal of extremists and nationalists bent on wresting control of the capital for themselves.

Along with Mr Djindjic's seat, they also took over the capital's biggest independent television station, Studio B, interrupting news coverage of the sacking and replacing it with a non-stop diet of music videos. The two acts so incensed the citizens of Belgrade that thousands of them spontaneously appeared on the streets blowing whistles, just as they did every day for three months last winter.

It was not a joyous protest, however, as



Iron fist: Serbian riot police facing hundreds of ethnic Albanian demonstrators in Pristina, Kosovo. The police used tear gas to disperse the protesters, mainly students demanding the return of Albanian-language tuition in local colleges.

Photograph: Srdjan Ilic/AP

riot police swooped down on the crowd, making numerous arrests and causing a number of injuries. Protest leaders immediately vowed to resume their demonstration last night, and every consecutive night, until Mr Djindjic was reinstated.

Mr Djindjic's undoing was not so much the new hardline attitude of Mr Milosevic

as the betrayal of his comrade-in-arms from last winter, the quisotic nationalist Vuk Draskovic, who has abandoned the opposition, where his popularity was slipping badly, and joined forces with the government.

The two men have quarrelled ever since their victories in last November's mu-

nicipal elections were recognised at the end of the winter protests, bringing the alliance they forged to an acrimonious end and permitting Mr Milosevic to retain his grip on power.

In the parliamentary and presidential elections that took place on 21 September, Mr Djindjic's Democratic Party did not par-

ticipate because it did not consider the poll fair. The political wind did not all blow Mr Milosevic's way, however. He failed to clinch an outright majority in Parliament, and his candidate for the Serbian Presidency, Zoran Lilic, failed to be elected in the first round.

The run-off, pitting Mr Lilic against the

ultra-nationalist leader Vojislav Seselj, is due this Sunday, but there is a danger the whole contest could be declared null and void if less than 50 per cent of the voters turn up.

There were even more violent clashes yesterday in Kosovo, where students from the majority Albanian population took to the streets only to be beaten back by Serbian riot police.

The authorities had given specific promises to foreign embassies in Belgrade that no violence would be used. But heavily-armed riot police used tear gas and clubs to break up a huge protest in Pristina by ethnic Albanians against Serb repression in the worst clash between Serbs and Albanians since Serbia stripped Kosovo of autonomy in 1989.

The protesters were mostly ethnic Albanian students demanding a right to return to Albanian-language education at university.

WHY THE WEST MUST ADMIT ITS ERROR

Two apparently contradictory tides are pulling at the Balkans. In Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic has decided to exert an iron grip on political life and snuff out the one beacon of democracy - the Belgrade city council - in any position to oppose him.

In Serb-held Bosnia, by contrast, we are seeing the first tentative steps towards pluralism, as S-For troops deny the hardliners in Pale their stranglehold on the media and a second power base emerges in Banja Luka under

the Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic.

This is almost a 180-degree flip from the political environment in the latter stages of the Balkan wars, when Mr Milosevic - rightly or wrongly - was considered the man who could knock heads together and talk the Bosnian Serbs into accepting a peace treaty, while the Bosnian Serbs themselves were seen as extremist, monolithic and unreliable.

The West was almost certainly wrong to put so much

store by Mr Milosevic, tolerating the authoritarian, gangster-ridden regime he established in Serbia and Montenegro into the bargain.

It was forced to admit some of the error of its ways last winter, when students and opposition street demonstrators pushed Mr Milosevic into a humiliating admission of defeat in Serbia's municipal elections. And it should admit the same thing now, so that Mr Milosevic stops short of the absolutist solution he seems to be inching towards.

Nato seizes TV transmitters run by Karadzic allies

The peace-keeping force in Bosnia yesterday made its toughest strike yet against Radovan Karadzic and his acolytes. They seized four television transmitters under Serb control, closing their virulently anti-Western broadcasting service. Andrew Gumbel reports.

Hundreds of troops belonging to the Nato-led Stabilisation Force, or S-For, swooped on the transmitters in the dead of night and ringed them with armoured vehicles. The operation all but muzzled the media power of Mr Karadzic, who is wanted on international war crimes charges. It also handed a major propaganda victory to Mr Krajisnik's rival, the Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic, who since July has headed a revolt against the leadership in Pale from her stronghold in Banja Luka in northwestern Bosnia. According

to Nato sources, she was immediately offered control of the four transmitters - which included one on Mount Trebevic just above Pale itself - but was still deliberating yesterday whether she wanted to take up the offer.

The political struggle between the two rival factions has largely been fought over television. Until yesterday, Mrs Plavsic controlled the airwaves over around 40 per cent of Bosnian Serb territory, winning praise from the international community for allowing an unintrusive editorial style on news items.

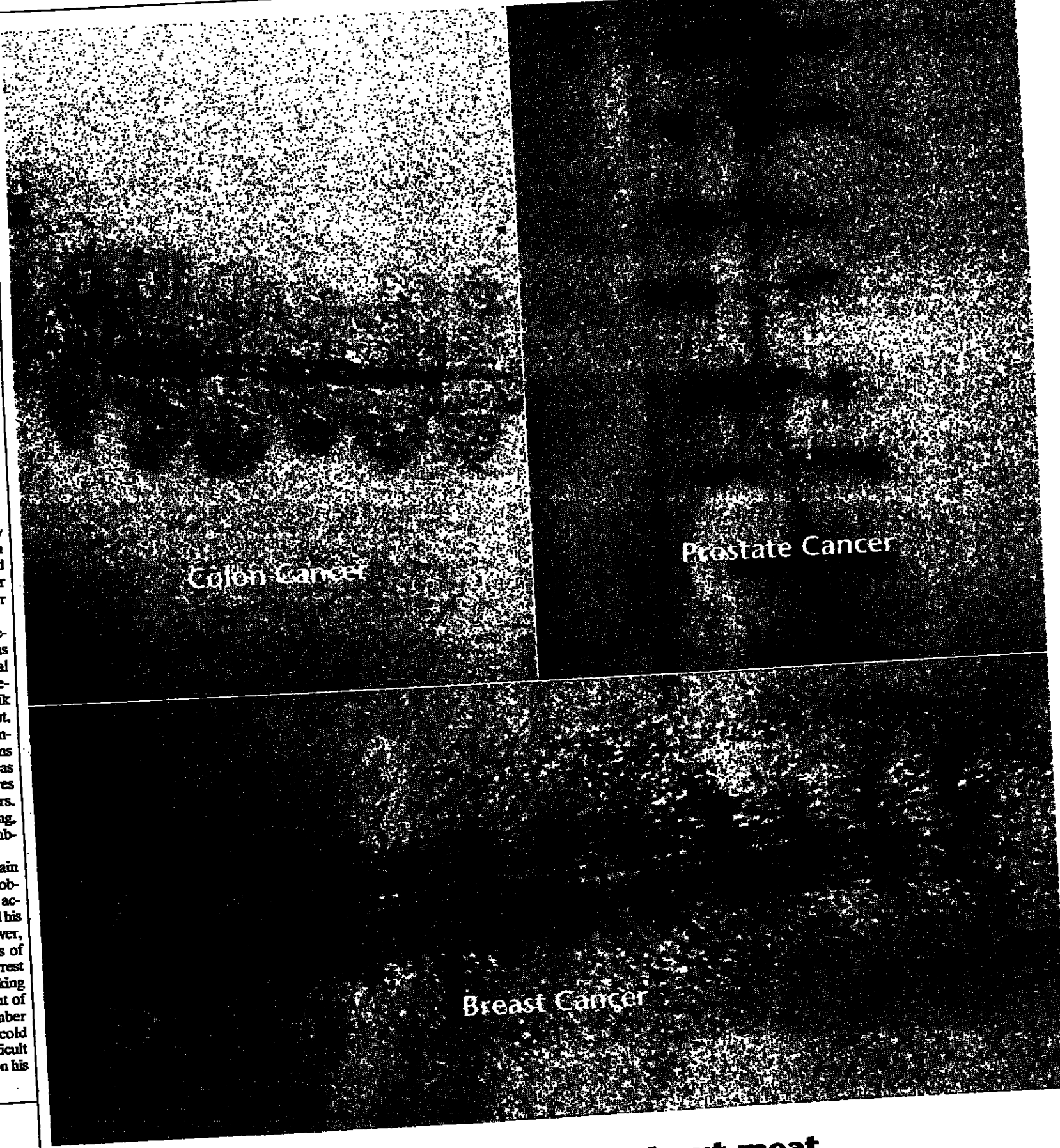
Two of the transmitters seized yesterday, near Doboj and Bijeljina, were the subject of a bitter struggle for much of the last week of August. At that time, S-For first seized them on behalf of Mrs Plavsic, then gave them back to Mr Krajisnik as part of a deal to encourage the Pale Serbs to withdraw their threat to boycott last month's municipal elections.

Yesterday's action provides vital clues to Western government thinking on Bosnia. Ostensibly, the transmitters were

seized because of "highly provocative" tampering of a broadcast made by the United Nations war crimes prosecutor Louise Arbour and aired over the weekend.

But the action was also a response to mounting accusations of softness by the international community in Bosnia. The pre-election deal with Mr Krajisnik was widely criticised as a sell-out, and several aspects of the handling of the municipal elections themselves have been decried as suspect by both official figures and independent observers. Nearly three weeks after voting, results still have not been published.

Diplomatic sources explain that the elections were an obstacle to excessively robust action against Mr Karadzic and his friends. Now that they are over, there are growing rumours of Mr Karadzic's imminent arrest by S-For troops - the thinking being that he should be out of the way before the November elections, and before cold weather makes it more difficult for S-For troops to swoop on his mountain chalet in Pale.



It's much easier to cut out meat

According to official statistics, cancer is the cause of one in four deaths in this country.

And now the Government have issued a warning that eating meat can increase your risk of cancer, while eating more fresh fruit and vegetables can help prevent the disease. In fact, a study published in the British Medical Journal estimates that vegetarians have up to 40% less risk of becoming victims.

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BAR KEEPERS FRIEND



Weird science: As if to illustrate the public's growing fascination with the bizarre, the United States Postal Service yesterday put on sale a new issue of stamps featuring legends of the Hollywood horror scene

Photograph: Reuters

Solid citizens acquire a taste for the macabre

Upstanding members of society have apparently developed a taste for murderers, the occult and body piercing, Jason Bennett, Crime Correspondent, reports on some weird findings.

Lurid topics such as serial killers, black magic and vampires are just as likely to interest so-called "normal people" as mentally ill criminals, a study has discovered. In fact, a fascination in many "deviant" subjects, including Hitler, mass murderers,

and the paranormal is more likely in stable citizens than psychologically disturbed offenders, according to the report.

Dr Vincent Egan, a chartered clinical psychologist from the East Midlands Centre for Forensic Mental Health, believes television, newspapers and books have whetted people's appetites for macabre subjects. He said: "A sub-culture of people interested in lurid things seems to have developed."

In the study, 142 people - from fishermen and nurses, to students and security guards - were questioned on whether they had an interest in certain topics, along with

54 mentally disordered offenders, whose crimes can range from shoplifters to murderers. While lurid and violent interests have generally been associated with offenders such as the Moors murderer Ian Brady, who was obsessed with Nazism, the findings showed that the "sane" people were more interested in some deviant subjects.

The expressed greater interest in the paranormal, Hitler and fascism, and serial killers, with a similar level of interest in vampires and werewolves, tattoos and body piercing, black magic and paganism.

Dr Egan, who prevented his findings at

the British Psychological Society's division of criminological and legal psychology annual conference in Cambridge yesterday, concluded that the results show that you cannot assume that someone who has lurid or sensational interests also has a deviant personality.

As examples of a growing interest in bizarre, sensational, and violent material he pointed to the Internet websites where people could look at pictures of surgical operations, magazines about the paranormal and the occult, and best-selling books on mass murderers.

He said that people traditionally asso-

ciated these subjects with psychologically damaged people. As an example, he said he had a patient who used to bite her tongue so that she could drink her blood like a vampire and used to correspond with an American serial killer. "An awful lot of people want to know about serial killers and this study shows that you don't necessarily have a personality disorder just because you have an interest in this subject."

Dr Egan intends to carry out further research into this subject, but is considering asking whether people are interested in flying saucers and little green men rather than keeping rats and spiders.

Gruesome interests

142 "normal" people and 54 mentally ill criminals were questioned on whether they were interested in a range of topics.

	Normal people (%)	Mentally ill (%)
Serial killers	60	44
Paranormal	77	69
Hitler and fascism	19	15
Vampires and werewolves	29	32
Tattoos and body piercing	28	30
Black magic	19	22
Paganism	17	22
True crime	68	70
Martial arts	28	59
Mercenaries and SAS	28	37
Guns and shooting	18	39
Keeping rats and spiders	12	26
Horror films and stories	46	61
Crossbows, knives and swords	13	44

Bullied girl's home 'was stoned'

An inquest opened yesterday into the death of 13-year-old Kelly Yeomans, who killed herself after complaining that she was being bullied.

Five arrests have also been made after her family and neighbours claimed that she was hounded to death by years of victimisation from gangs in her home town of Allenton, Derby. Neighbours have described how up to 15 youths

pelted the family's council house with stones, eggs and butter in the days before she died.

The inquest heard how police were called to the home of the Salvation Army girl on Monday morning after her father discovered her body.

Police said yesterday that five teenagers, including some pupils from Kelly's school, have been arrested in connection with her death. The de-

cision on whether to press charges will be made by a panel of police and social workers.

Kelly's family claim to have endured three years of abuse by local teenagers but have no idea why they were targeted.

Her father, Ivan Yeomans, 45, said: "We got on with the neighbours and have no idea why these boys picked on us. I suppose it's because we are quiet and turn the other

cheek. It hit Kelly very badly. It tore her apart."

Kelly, described as a kind and caring girl, was a member of the Salvation Army, along with her sister Sarah, 16, and other family members. It is thought that Kelly swallowed painkillers on Sunday night because she was unable to face going back to school after the weekend.

— Amanda Kelly

'Cracker' profiling dismissed as ineffective

The use of psychologists to provide "offender profiles" in police investigation has been called into question after a study has concluded that most are inaccurate and many are useless.

Less than 3 per cent lead to the identification of the criminal and only 15 per cent provide new lines of inquiry.

Almost every police force in the country now uses offender profiles, which have gained an

almost mystical reputation with the public through television dramas such as *Cracker*, yet until now no-one has assessed whether they do any good.

A five-year project supported by the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers has found huge differences between the different "experts" some of whom have very poor track records.

Researchers questioned 184 officers who had used a profil-

er in an investigation and discovered that 2.7 per cent lead to an identification of the offender, although 84 per cent said it had been "useful".

The "Coals to Newcastle" project was headed by Detective Chief Inspector Gary Copson of the Metropolitan Police. "You may as well toss a coin for some," he said.

He added that some of the profiles he examined were "ridicled with inaccuracies and in-

consistencies which suggest they didn't really do any good." Presenting his findings at the British Psychological Society's annual conference in Cambridge, DCI Copson argued that profiles should come with a strong warning to police officers that they are not cure-alls.

Supporters of offender profiles will be angry at the new report, which they believe is unfairly critical of psychologists.

— Jason Bennett

THE INDEPENDENT

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Gloria Swanson in *Perfect Understanding* (1933) wearing her diamond Cartier bracelets, on display from tomorrow at the British Museum's Cartier show.

Solicitors gave advice which was inadequate, incomplete or wrong in the latest independent Consumers' Association investigation for its *Which?* magazine. But the survey was swiftly ridiculed by the Law Society, the solicitors' professional body, for being "unrealistic" and based on fictional and untypical legal problems.

In the study, the second conducted for *Which?* in the last two years, researchers posed as ordinary customers and took one of four different consumer problems to a total of 79 solicitors. Today's issue of the magazine claims that most of them gave incomplete advice which would have meant their "clients" might not have pursued all avenues for potential claims and been unlikely to recover all their losses.

Helen Parker, the editor of *Which?*, said: "The Law Societies of England and Wales and Scotland need to take an active role in monitoring and improving the standard of advice provided by solicitors. Failing this, the Government should look at other ways of regulating the profession."

The Law Society said it questioned the value of yet another small-scale "mystery shopper" survey, covering such a narrow area of law and using such a research method. Citing one of the four hypothet-

ical problems, a spokesman said: "Clients do not generally come to solicitors with elaborate stories about not having adequate insurance to cover the cost of the damage from an exploding five-year-old washing machine. People see a solicitor because their marriage has broken down, or they have been injured in an accident, or they are buying a house, or they have been charged with a criminal offence."

In what *Which?* highlights as one of the worst cases, a researcher telephoned a solicitor to book an appointment and was offered poor advice by a person who appeared to be the firm's telephonist. When the researcher called back to confirm the advice, a switchboard operator also offered advice, and also got it wrong. The Law Society described the example as "bizarre", questioning whether a real-life caller would have treated a conversation with the operator in the same way as one with a qualified solicitor.

Philip Sycamore, the society's president, said: "Which? magazine fails to mention that they had to apologise publicly to a firm they named in the survey two years ago because they made serious allegations against a firm which proved to be entirely wrong."

— Patricia Wynn Davies,
Legal Affairs Editor

A leading prosecutor broke down at the Old Bailey yesterday as he outlined a catalogue of torture inflicted on a six-month-old baby in the weeks leading up to his death.

Barrister Jeremy Donne was unable to continue describing Liam Roos's final agony shortly before being shaken to death by 35-year-old Michael Clifton.

Clifton, unemployed, from Stoke Newington, north London admitted the manslaughter of the baby on 8 May this year. The court was told that Liam's mother, Joan Spate, met Clifton two months after she gave birth and he became her boyfriend. Clifton formed an instant hatred for the baby and embarked upon a sustained and sadistic campaign of torture. The assaults included scratching the inside of the baby's throat with a knife and putting turpentine and washing up liquid in his mouth. He later admitted that he had known he was going to kill the child.

Judge Hawkins made an interim order under the Mental Health Act for Clifton to be assessed. The court was told that he suffered severe personality disorder bordering on psychopathic.

A drug-addict businessman who talked the footballer Faustino Asprilla into giving him £1,000 to help him with accommodation, then spent the lot on cocaine, was ordered to do 140 hours' community service yesterday.

Judge Peter Fingert made the order after hearing that Newcastle United striker Asprilla had disowned businessman Leonel Sarmiento-Mottoa, 31, following the deception. Sarmiento-Mottoa, who used to go to nightclubs and restaurants with Colombian-born Asprilla, was "saddened" but not really surprised by the decision, his counsel told Southwark Crown Court. The judge told Sarmiento-Mottoa: "I do not consider that imprisonment in these circumstances would benefit anyone. It would not benefit the public, nor you, nor your family." Sarmiento-Mottoa, from north London, was cleared last week of planning to supply the narcotic, but convicted of possessing 41 grams of the drug.

British mountain guides have "acquitted" one of their colleagues of negligence in a fatal accident in the Alps, contrary to the ruling of a High Court judge.

Scottish-based David Cuthbertson, 49, was said by Mr Justice Dyson to have ignored "elementary and fundamental" practice to protect Gerald Hedley who fell to his death in July 1990. Following the ruling last June, Mr Hedley's six-year-old son was awarded damages of £150,000 from the guide's insurers. However the climbing world never accepted the judgment and after a hearing at which Mr Cuthbertson was given a "thorough interrogation", the professional standards committee of the British Mountain Guides found he was "not at fault". — Stephen Goodwin

Cult television comedies *Shooting Stars* and *The Fast Show* are to stage a series of huge rock-style live events.

to stage a series of huge rock-style live events.

Vic Reeves, Bob Mortimer, Ulrika Jonsson, Paul Whitehouse, Charlie Higson and the rest will re-create their television success live for 3,500 comedy fans a night at the Labatt's Apollo in Hammersmith, west London. Tickets went on sale yesterday for the first six nights of an open ended run, starting on 27 January. Higson said: "We're doing it because it is a buzz, going on stage in front of a live audience - and because of the money."



Fighting fit: Emma, 13, sparring with another girl Photograph: Paul Cousans

The world of boxing has been split over a decision to allow women and girls to fight on the amateur circuit. As two 13-year-old girls prepare to fight the British Medical Association says it gives women equal rights to suffer eye and brain damage. Steve Boggan listens to the arguments.

Cooper has come as a result of the ABA's decision to recognise women in amateur boxing in order to avoid a legal challenge which many in the sport believed it would inevitably face.

It has caused a huge split among boxers and fight fans, best summed up by Barry McGuigan, the former world featherweight champion. "I have mixed emotions," he said. "As president of the Professional Boxers' Association I stand up for boxers who have their licences revoked, so it would not be right for me to stand up now and say women shouldn't be allowed to box."

"This seems a demented extension of equal opportunities," said Dr Bill O'Neill, of the British Medical Association, yesterday. And, for once, his opposition to a boxing match was supported by boxers.

As Amanda Prince and Emma Brammer, both 13, prepared to step into the ring tonight in a historic bout made possible by new Amateur Boxing Association rules, many of the hard men of the sport were turning soft.

"Never mind political correctness or European laws, I am totally against it," said Henry Cooper, former British and European heavyweight champion. "Women are made differently from men. Their entire body structure is not like a man's. Women are made for loving and not hitting."

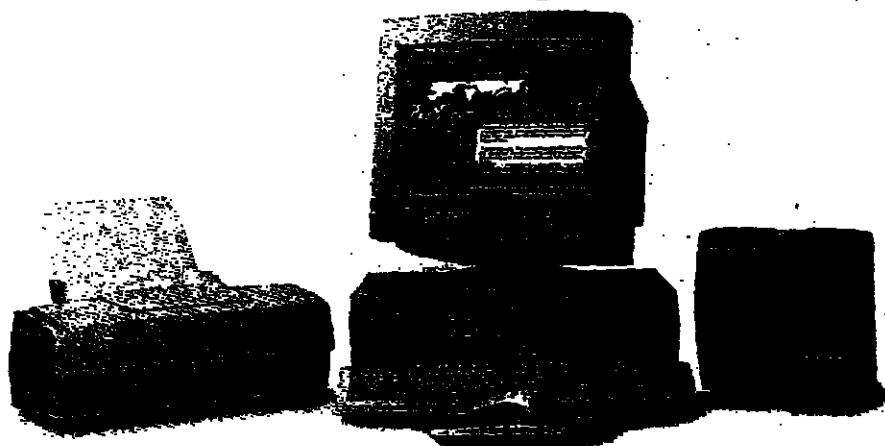
The unlikely alliance of the BMA – which has campaigned for years against all forms of boxing – and the likes of Henry

The two girls will step out tonight for three 90-second rounds at Key's nightclub in Stoke-on-Trent. "Some people have said nice things about the fight and my boxing and others haven't been quite so nice," Emma said. "But they are entitled to their opinion. Now I just want to get on with it."

Her parents, Elizabeth and Derek Brammer, said they would be there to support her. "I will be watching with my hands half over my face," said Mrs Brammer. "My husband has been involved in boxing for a number of years and my son Jason boxes, so I know all about it. Women don't actually realise just how safe it is."

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25408

Third class travel: From now on, calves being taken to slaughter will have legal protection. Photograph: Geraint Lewis

The European Commission is also more than a year late in producing detailed specifications for lorries which carry farm animals. In their absence, Britain will continue with its own 22-year-old vehicle standards for live animal transport. Mr Morley said the Government would step up the pressure on the European Commission and other EU member states to agree on these specifications.

Young farm animals can travel for nine hours before a minimum rest period off the vehicle of one hour, followed by a further nine hours' travel. Adult cattle and sheep can travel for 14 hours before a minimum rest of one hour, followed by a further 14 hours' travel.

Live cattle exports from Britain have ceased following the BSE ban on UK beef exports.

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هكذا من الأصل

هنا من الأصل

Here are three projects to lift the spirits, particularly spirits trapped in the houses they already occupy: a glass dining room, an extension that takes a house's inside outside and, perhaps most pleasing of all, an idea that turns a bland basement window into a work of art. Not simply a matter of let there be light; also let there be excitement. Nonie Niesewand talks to the architects on site.

An extension to your house built out of glass? The word conservatory comes to mind, closely followed by the names Merchant Ivory. Isn't every glass structure attached to every house you've seen redolent of the past? Too hot or too cold. Too bright or hazy with condensation and dependent on a skeleton of wood or metal.

If that is your idea of heaven, so be it. But there are other possibilities that are more exciting, more practical, more modern. The structure shown here has none of those old conservatory characteristics.

The secret is partly with the architects, but mostly it lies in the glass. Pilkington's glass is coated in silicone; it doesn't over-heat and it has the best UV factor of any glass tough enough to form a facade. Silicone sealing makes joints invisible. And so! No glazing bars!

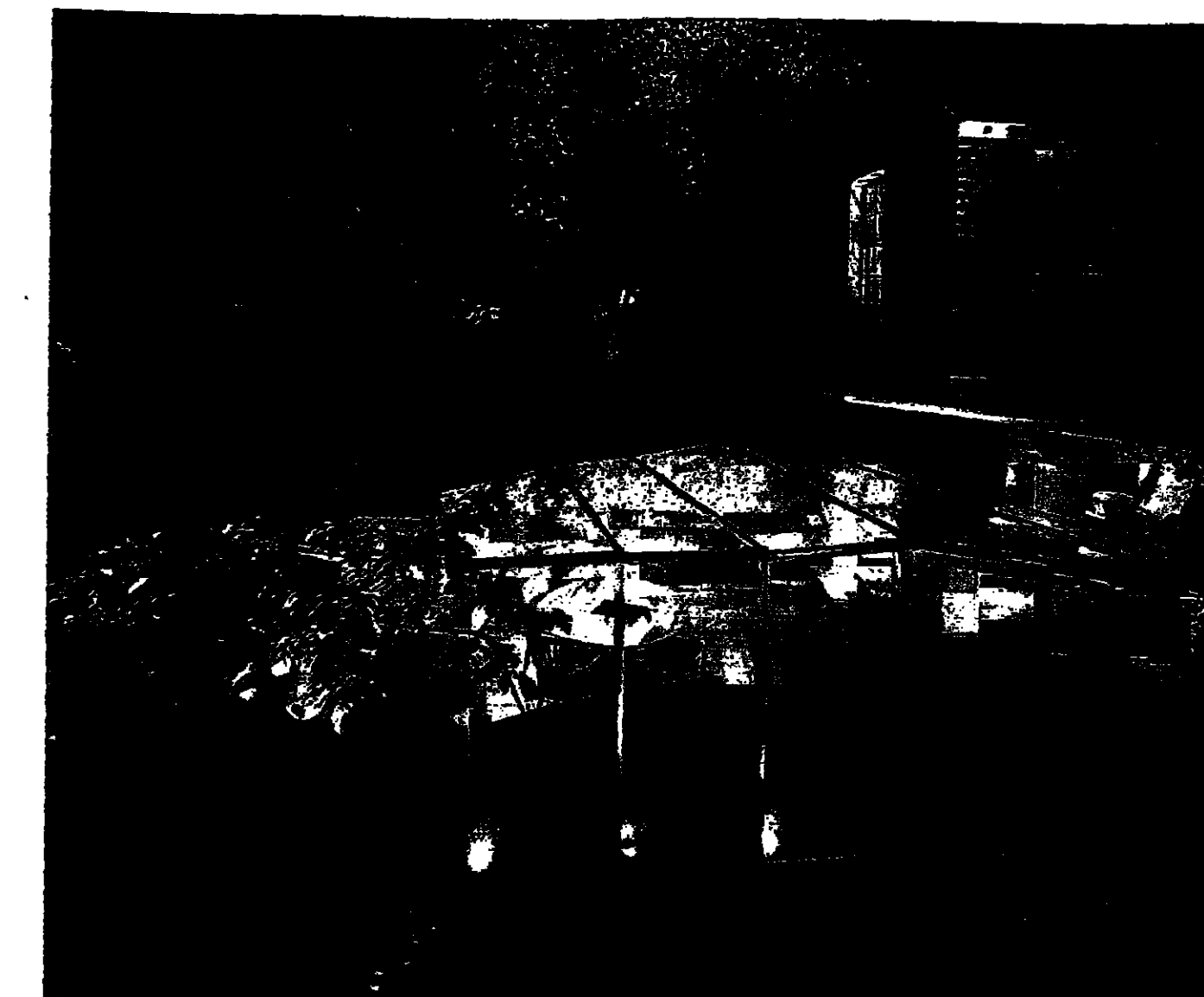
The Royal Institute of British Architects, in search of potential winners of its Stirling Prize, has chosen a handful of small-scale extensions to town houses. Here are three of them. Interestingly enough, they're all dining rooms – just when you thought kitchens had swallowed them up or ever.

Glazed dining room extension on a Georgian house
After moving somewhere smaller once their five children had grown up and left, architect Cany Ash's parents wanted more living space for their five children and grandchildren to meet. Their friendly raker-style kitchen ended in an L-shape with a large picture window installed in the twenties, when the place was used as a nursery school.

Rather than close off the pretty garden with its well established cherry tree, Cany Ash and fellow architect Robert Sakula determined to wrap one side of the kitchen with a glazed front extension, sheltered by a cantilevered glass roof. Pilkington K glass, with its silicone joints that obviate the need for glazing bars, gave them scope to shape the conservatory in a very intricate, geometric way.

"Silicone glazing opened a new way of thinking and let us use glass in a skeletal way," says Ash. Each glazed wall panel just slightly alters the angle or lowers the height to join on to the next, like a great glazed caterpillar – all the more remarkable when you consider that glass is straight, flat, hard and cold.

To match the evolutionary path that the extension takes, the giant cantilevered roof



The pterodactyl in the garden: a grade II listed building in North London grows a glamorous tail, a glass dining room where ingenuity and new technology are brilliantly combined

Arcad



How the need for a dining room becomes a triumph for the spirit of enlightenment

above is jointed at different angles like a giant pterodactyl wing. The staggered gradient means that the glass extension goes from the full height of the first-floor landing down to the relatively low garden entrance that matches the height of the remaining picture window. Acid-etched egg shapes on each roof panel cast interesting opaque reflections at night when small halogen up-lighters set in the slate floor beam up at them. Heating runs under the slate floor which extends into the terraced garden in great zig-zags. These simple cut-out shapes help to extend the boundaries be-

yond the new glass extension and link outside with in.

The Ashes say that sitting in their new extension is like being in the garden which envelopes them. Even better, the heat retained in a typical sheet of double-glazed K glass is equal to that retained in a brick wall. As Cany Ash says: "You're not throwing money through the glass."

Contract Value: £16,000

RIBA jury comments: "... creature-like image of F wings of the roof in glass ... a gull-

lotine of glass slicing through the slate paving ... crafted detailing".

A dark basement dining room sees the light

A new building opposite blocked what little light there was in the basement dining room of a London couple's flat. Rather than live with the lights on all day the owners commissioned the architect Nick Coombe and designer Jonathan Stickland to solve the problem. Caroline Yates, who teaches at Prue Leith's cookery school, identified Stickland as a designer she liked from his set-squared filo pastry cases on her course.

He replaced the original sash window with 10mm toughened plate glass, etched on one side, which spans one metre. It swivels within the plastered niche, cantilevering above it to shield the pavement grilles or coming down at an angle like a shade to diffuse the light. They dug deep into the plasterwork and angled it interestingly to frame the installation. A single down-lighter halogen beam – which they call the "soup ladle" – highlights the sculpture. Stainless steel spikes protect the toughened glass of the long horizontal window at pavement level. It was difficult to get planning permission but Stickland argued that rights to daylight are not a planning issue.

Contract Value £10,000

RIBA jury comments: "... minimal impact on the street ... an example of what can be achieved on a modest scheme through detailed design".

Taking a dining room into the garden
Like every modern architect, Chris Wilkinson dreamed of building his own home from scratch. But the reality and difficulty of finding a site – and then the time to actually build – meant that when the family moved home last year, they bought a Victorian house in Dulwich, South London, and decided to extend the dining space to house their Charles Eames table. Rather than make the distinction between inside and outside too obvious, Wilkinson decided to extend the white-plastered party wall from inside the dining room to the garden

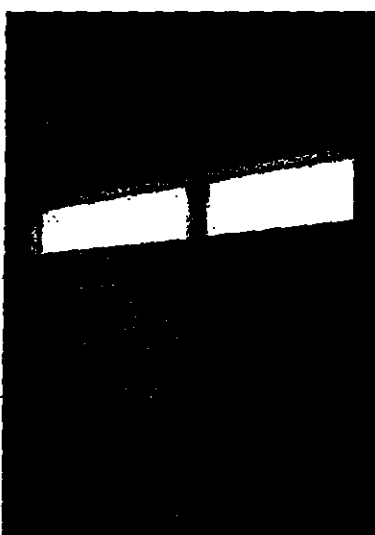
wall outside, as well as the sandstone floor. This makes the extension more like a room installation than a patio adjoining a dining room. Pilkington K glass joined with silicone seals practically make the walls disappear. "Besides," says Wilkinson, "it's got the lowest UV rating." Indoors, a glass panel within the roof has a chamfered frame like a light-box, angled to bring the sky indoors by day. At night it makes a spectacular frame for the fibre-optic sculptures that his sculptor wife, Diane Edmunds, makes. Both of them were inspired by the way in which the American sculptor James Turrell uses structure to capture light. The flat roof is emphasised with a steel joist profile and at one side a piece of architectural ironmongery jutting from the roof has a long chain carrying rainwater down it into a deep channel that demarcates the terrace. *Architects' Journal* gave Chris Wilkinson their recent cover story for his celebrated public projects, which include the Stratford railway station, where the Jubilee line terminates, as well as the recently opened Stratford Market train shed, the Challenge of Materials gallery at the Science Museum, the South Quay footbridge in Docklands, the Tyne Millennium bridge as well as Science World in Bristol. No wonder Chris Wilkinson calls the dining room extension to his Victorian family home a "very minor project".

Contract Value: £35,000

RIBA jury comments: "... stealthy detailing ... a new and airy relationship between the house and garden ... refinement and restraint".



The basement that rose above itself: a boring, sightless window is transformed into something to behold



Photograph: Arcad



The inside-outside room: an architect treats himself

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ARAD

Walking on egg shells

Who would have thought, when I revealed the plans in *The Independent* (August 22) for an innovative house in Hampstead, it would stir up such a storm? Objections to it are based on the unusual plans for the house's construction: two shells – a world away from four walls supporting a pitched roof with a chimney which is still the way that children draw houses. Its potential neighbour on Courtney Avenue, the architect John Siefert, calls it a "broken egg". "Futuristic house will dwarf ancient woodland" was the unrealistic headline in the *Hampstead & Highgate Express*.

The truth is that unlike the 70-year old house it would replace, the Arad one reveals ancient woodland behind. Stung by the aggravation on the avenue, Arad's clients wrote to all the residents to explain why their family wanted to live in a modern house, and added that they admire "the beautiful gardens and majestic trees of Courtney Avenue, the jewel in Kenwood's crown".

Having embraced local residents' complaints, the *Ham & High* have now canvassed more positive opinions. One says he

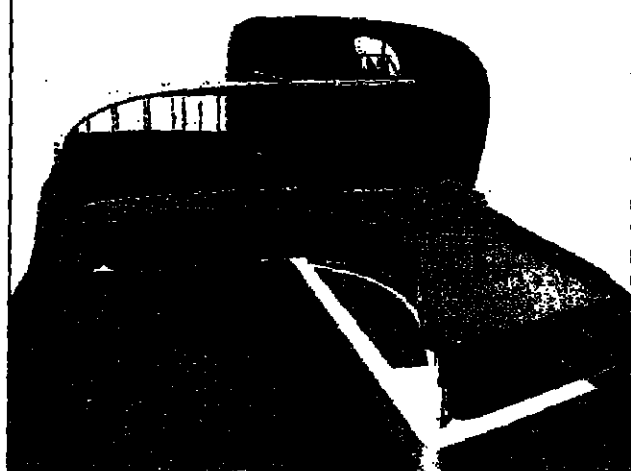
wants it to go ahead so that history isn't frozen; another calls it an interesting sculpture between the trees. A journalist reminds the doubters that one of the delights of living in Hampstead or Highgate is "the rich mix of domestic architecture", adding a reminder that Lubetkin built there and that Goldfinger's house in Willow Road is now a popular National Trust property.

English Heritage bussed in a group of experts last Friday to check out whether the demolition of a 70-year-old Walter Quennell house was support-

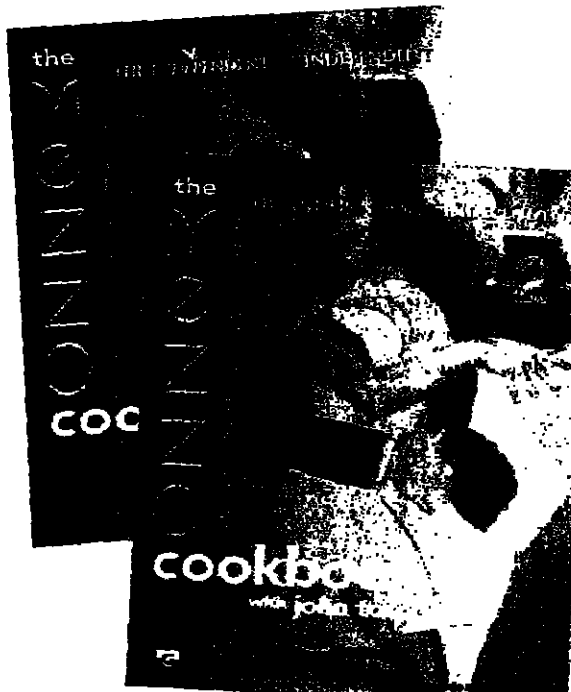
able. It's not official, but it's no secret that they now approve of Arad's scheme.

Now there is an air of reconciliation in Courtney Avenue. The architects have built a scale model to explain – over tea and sandwiches – the building's unusual geometry to residents. Will Harringay Council give planning permission? Arad exudes a quiet optimism. Five years ago the project would have been doomed; now he thinks that maybe, just maybe, it has a future.

Nonie Niesewand



THE INDEPENDENT INDEPENDENT



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For a Carpenter, it's still yesterday once more

For Richard Carpenter there's no escape: fourteen years after the death of his sister Karen he's still her captive. "Can somebody who wrote and arranged 'Goodbye to Love' really be square?" he asks. To which question, says Jonie Lawrence there is only one answer.

The waiter is becoming extremely stumpy. No, the American gentleman really can't sit and have photographs taken of him playing on the lounge piano. Hotel policy. Anybody who did we say he was again? Clearly it's time for the definitive vocal reminder. "Every sha-la-la, every whoa-oh-whoa..." does the trick. The penny drops immediately. Oh, THAT Richard Carpenter. Ginger without Fred. Wise without Morecambe. Richard without Karen. Sad, sad, sad.

"I always felt that my role was to be in the background," he says, recalling the heady days when the Carpenters racked up twenty hits among the top 40. She with the flicked back hair and the maxi dresses, him bobbing behind the keyboards. So apple-pie wholesome, so very square.

Over 20 years on, he minds being called "square". Surprisingly he still minds. "I'm not square," he counters in nervy fashion. "Anybody who can come up with, not only the song, but the arrangement to 'Goodbye to Love' isn't square. I think those cheek to cheek shots of us didn't help the image whatsoever."

Now, approaching 51, Richard Carpenter looks - well - square, in his diagonally patterned acrylic jumper and grey flannel trousers. His hair with its incipient balding patch is neatly parted in prep school fashion. And for a man who need never do anything, ever again, except pick up the constant stream of royalties cheques, Mr Carpenter appears remarkably lacking in confidence. He is polite, suspicious and palpably vulnerable. His American manager hovers protectively only two feet away. My questions bring on the same eye-swivelling anxiety Darren of *Bewitched* had when he feared his wife was about to turn him into a plant. Richard is uncannily like Darren.

When his sister Karen died of a heart attack brought on by her anorexia nervosa in 1983 the Carpenters had sold over one million records. Their popularity had dipped but if Karen were alive they would still be recording today. Or that's how Richard sees it. "We'd be making more albums, spend more time in the studio and do an occasional tour. Summer tours, a week per venue, every other year a UK tour." It sounds so planned and present tense, it's as if Richard has never fully adjusted to what actually happened.

Now married, he has four children but still lives in the same LA suburb of Downey the Carpenter family moved to when Richard and Karen were teenagers. Much has been written and hinted at about the disturbing closeness of their brother-

sister relationship.

Even now the interest in the Carpenters phenomenon hasn't abated. There are three new American documentaries currently in the pipeline.

"We spent a hell of a lot of time together," he says uncomfortably. But weren't they uncommonly close?

"With the exception of the occasional squabble we always got along very well as kids and growing up. It was a damned good thing, cause we were together in the studio and together out on the road." Perhaps it's a loss he will never get over? "Have you ever lost a brother or a sister?" he asks.

Despite the millions of times he's talked about it over the years, the pain still seems raw. "I hear the only thing that's worse is losing a child, which I can well imagine. That great voice, that great lady, gone at 32. I don't see any rhyme or reason for it." He must have known how seriously ill she was. "I could see it in her eyes. But even though you say to yourself 'You can die from this, you never really believe it's going to happen.'"

Unprompted he volunteers that he still feels guilty about the other emotions he went through after her death. "It was a lit-

tle bit selfish of me. In addition to everything else I thought of all these songs yet to be recorded which she was not going to be able to do." In recent years he has spent most of his time producing other people's records. Nothing he has composed has enjoyed the success of the Carpenters in their heyday.

His "new" album - Richard Carpenter, Pianist, Arranger, Composer, Conductor - is (bar two new tracks) an instrumental reworking of all the old songs. Why go over old ground? "If I just took the original arrangements that would be a travesty to Karen's memory, but this is a whole different animal from the Carpenters records." You might say he's cashing in. "They're my songs you know," he retorts defensively in particularly Darren-like fashion. "I have as much right as anybody to record them. I knew as I was making it that people would be popping at me. But if I tried to spend my life pleasing everybody I'd be in a loony bin." Would Karen approve? "Absolutely - I can't stress strongly enough how much she would. She was my number one supporter. She would love some of the changes I've put on. She is in it in spirit without a doubt."

In November there's another compilation album, *Carpenters: The Love Songs*. With so much energy still devoted to songs that he wrote many years ago perhaps he worries that's his lot?

"Of course I do. I guess Kismet had me making it at a younger age. I don't know. I don't think the well's run dry. You see I



haven't really tried a great deal. When I do sit down and try it turns out to be something that doesn't really satisfy me. I think a number of people go through that though. Tchaikovsky had it."

That he says is about to change. He's now working to a deadline and has a new

song "rattling around" his head. "It's a tribute to Karen - as a human being and as a singer." He has never wanted to work full time with another singer. "I've worked with the best," he says simply. "If people are really talented it comes out sounding effortless. But it's not easy." Demonstrating this, his eyes focused on some point into the middle distance, he sings the whole of the first verse of "Goodbye to Love", poking the air as he reaches "All I know is how to live without it".

When their biopic was being made Richard informed the producers that, at the same time Karen had been struggling with anorexia, he had been addicted to Quaaludes. "It was a big deal for me so they revised the script and the word came back. 'If Richard feels he has to have this in here then we'll put it in.' There was nothing I wanted more than not having it in there but I felt it was the honourable thing to do. I was coming off like a boy scout and I wanted to be an upstanding guy and not have everything blamed on Karen."

Richard Carpenter, Pianist, Arranger, Composer, Conductor is out now. *Carpenters: The Love Songs* is released on November 10th.

ANN TRENEMAN

Serve myself? What a gas!

Filling my car with petrol the other day I somehow managed to douse myself in it. I looked around for someone to tell a self-immolation joke or two, but only found the usual array of grim-faced types brandishing nozzles. I waited in to pay, and the man behind the counter did not even register that he was serving a human petrol bomb. "Sixteen pounds," he grunted. It was enough to make you want a cigarette very badly indeed.

So it was with a sense of relief that I read that Shell are bringing back the pump attendant. I plan to be first in the queue. "Can I help you?" the young and rather muscular petrol pump attendant used to ask as I drove up. And, of course, he could. There were tanks to fill, windows to wipe, oil to be dipped. Now the only service-type humans on hand at petrol stations are the grunting ones who barely look up as they take your money.

They call it "self-serve" but I just call it rude. It is hard to think of a shop where you have to do so much for yourself. Do restaurants insist that you whip up your own lunch?

"The last thing women want to do is pump their own petrol," said Phil Turberville, a Shell executive turned pump attendant who launched the company's "pit stop" initiative. This is, of course, deeply sexist but sounds OK by me. I can remember the day my colleague Barb gasped. "Fill my own tank! Why would I want to do that if someone will do it for me?"

In recent years there has been no one in Britain to serve the Barbs of this world. Kathryn Pope, brand development manager for Shell UK, understands this because Shell has been analysing its customers.

"Price is not the driving force for most of the UK," she says. Instead the company identified six customer attitudes. There are those who buy brand names and those who don't care. Some are guided only by price while others will not queue. Finally there are "low confidence drivers" and the bolder, "relaxed" type.

Ms Pope would not spell out who exactly would go for service over price, say, but Barb, for example, is more than a little impatient, hates getting dirty and likes to feel valued.

In some countries it is illegal to pump your own petrol. The idea is to preserve minimum-wage jobs but the result is that drivers get to sit back while someone else does the dirty work. It's the kind of thing some of us human petrol bombs could get used to very quickly indeed.

My daughter won't love me unless I give her £100 to go shopping

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE



DILEMMAS

Andrea, a struggling single parent, is upset by her 14-year-old daughter's demands for money: £100 for a shopping trip with rich friends. If she doesn't cough up, the girl says Andrea doesn't love her. Andrea could ask the father, who's never paid upkeep, but she feels so miserable she's had to take time off work with depression.

Andrea's daughter is growing up. Grown-ups want to have money and spend money, but Andrea's daughter has to learn that money doesn't grow on trees. It has to be earned. And Andrea ought to sit her daughter down and show her exactly where the money goes. After all, the poor child probably doesn't know what a gas bill looks like - she probably thinks gas and electricity just come whizzing into the house, like air. Does she have any idea what poll tax is, or how it's spent on street cleaning and libraries? Does she know how much prescription charges are? Does she realise that every time the washing machine is used, more money is going down the drain, along with the dirty water along with the expensive washing powder? Does she realise that baths and heating and all the other things she takes for granted, cost money? If Andrea could ask her advice on her budget and suggest how they cut down, it would also give her daughter much more of a sense of responsibility. "How are we going to find a little bit more money?" is the question to ask, not "How am I going to find money?"

Fourteen-year-old girls are not incapable of earning money, either, and by car-washing, newspaper-delivering, baby-sitting or walking other people's dogs Andrea's daughter could probably scrape up enough of her own cash to spend on clothes and sound systems, with only a small amount added by her mum. Her daughter isn't greedy, just a normal 14-year-old growing up. If she didn't begin to want to be financially autonomous at this age, and wanted to remain dependent on Andrea choosing her clothes from charity shops, then Andrea would indeed have something to worry about.

There are two other factors here. Why on earth has the father never paid a bean towards his daughter's upkeep? And why is it the poor daughter who has to go cap in hand to him? It sounds as if she hasn't had a lot of contact with him, and to have to crawl off to him asking for cash would be incredibly humiliating. It's difficult enough for adults to ask each other for money, but 14-year-old girls are pretty much incapable, unless it's from a close parent. She may feel that by asking her father for money she would risk losing what little affection he has for her, anyway.

No, it's Andrea who, with her ex-partner, conceived the child, and it's Andrea who ought to take the responsibility of meeting the father and having a talk about extra funds. Indeed she should have done this a long time ago, and, if it comes to it, she ought to be consulting a solicitor about this preposterous situation and, if need be, taking him to court.

The other factor is Andrea's unhappiness. It seems that she feels completely powerless about this situation, and retreats into depression, losing yet more money by taking time off work and staying at home crying. She should see her doctor, for a start, and see whether he or she could arrange a visit to a sensible, pragmatic counsellor who specialises in sorting out fairly simple family problems without delving deep into her past.

Andrea needs to take control. Her daughter's wail that her mother doesn't love her is part typical manipulative teenage emotional blackmail, but part, I think, a longing for her mother to pull herself together and be a proper mother, a mother who can make firm decisions, and take more initiative.

WHAT READERS SAY

Encourage your daughter to use money sensibly
Discussing your anxieties with your daughter is crucial. The more involved she is in discussions about budgeting and paying bills, the more aware she will become of your position.

Like her, I am the daughter of a low-income single parent, and although my siblings and I were clothed and fed, there simply wasn't enough for any "extras". We were encouraged therefore to finance our own treats and inessentials with odd jobs and part-time work.

Although I was often jealous of my better-off friends, I am now at an advantage, as my experience of budgeting on a low income is valuable in my life as an impoverished university student.

Don't let your daughter use emotional blackmail on you, and encourage her to become financially aware and independent - she will be grateful in the long run.
R Meek, Hove

Be firm: you can't give her all she is asking for
Your daughter is trying it on. Treat her as a young adult and explain that you cannot possibly give her what she wants, and that the financial pressures are making you ill. But be firm: no means no.

She will (though it won't happen overnight) remember the sacrifices you made over the years. But mostly she will remember the special love between you both: that sort of love never fades.
Sandra Harper, Belfast

Both of you need a bit of help - and love
I do not think it is altogether fair to describe your 14-year-old daughter as "greedy". At this age, she is probably unused to managing money - and has no concept of your struggles to cope.

Give her a fixed allowance, and open a bank or building society account for her. Get your own life better sorted. No one

can work non-stop with no breaks - go for a full-time job. Remember, your daughter is like a fledgling. You both need love and help.

Gillian Riva, Alderney, Channel Isles

Your daughter is a normal teenager - a bit spoilt
I have just suffered two or three awful years of mid-teen revolt (or revellingness) from my second daughter. At 17 she is still spiky, but gradually becoming much more relaxed and a good companion. Teenage girls can be real bitches...

Andrea's daughter sounds a little bit spoilt, and is possibly taking advantage of the lone parent situation of her mother. In fact, she's just "trying it on" with demands for money to keep up with her friends and has calculated how to hurt her mother the most. It just shows she's growing up and needs to be independent in some ways. I honestly doubt that her friends really have so much to spend on

one shopping trip - it sounds like bravado and showing off among the peer group. Most girls love browsing, trying on clothes in innumerable boutiques, ending up with a small top for £10. This can be good fun, I'm assured.

Suggestions. Andrea explains in a "grown-up" fashion why she can't afford vast sums - tells her about the bills, earnings and so on. Could the girl be given a small clothes allowance (Mother decides how much, and shouldn't be pressured into more than she can afford)? She could be paid small amounts for "extra jobs" such as window cleaning or car cleaning if she's willing, just to give her an idea of finances. She may well refuse - but at least it's been offered.

Basically, Andrea needs her daughter on her side so that they can support each other. She must be firm with her, so that the girl understands the situation.

Her daughter just sounds the normal teenage pain, but this could be hard to handle alone.
J Hunter (Mrs), Southampton

NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

I always thought we had a pretty normal childhood, but my sister has suddenly revealed that our father sexually abused her when she was nine or ten.

Apparently he crept into her room and fiddled with her at night, and she never told anyone.

I was around then, and noticed nothing, but who am I to believe, and whose side should I take? My father denies it totally, of course (and is dreadfully upset) as does my mother. My sister just shrugs her shoulders and says she never wants to see either of them again.

What can I do? I feel loyal to both of them, but I'm in such a difficult position.
Judith

Letters are welcome, and everyone who has a suggestion quoted will be sent a bouquet from Interflora

Send comments to me at the Features Department, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. (Fax 0171-293 2182) by Tuesday morning. And if you have a dilemma of your own that you would like to share, please let me know.

هكذا من الأطل

David Gill

David Ian Gill, film-maker and film restorer, born New Guinea 9 June 1928; married 1953 Pauline Wadsworth (two daughters); died Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire 28 September 1997.

I heard the news in Hollywood, halfway through a research trip. As I cancelled my appointments and headed for London, I wondered how we would cope without him. "We" being the staff of Photoplay Productions, the company he helped to found, devoted to that least commercial of all activities, the restoration and presentation of silent films.

For David Gill is irreplaceable. He was musical, and understood the complexities of composing and conducting, he knew the theatre and could stage "Live Cinema" presentations to a highly professional level, he had been a film editor and director and he knew how to restore films and to make documentaries. He didn't need us nearly so much as we needed him.

David Gill was born in New Guinea in 1928, where his father, Cecil Gill, brother of the artist Eric Gill, was a missionary doctor. The family left in 1933 when his mother contracted Blackwater Fever. He lived for years in Cardiff, where his father became a GP. He enrolled as a ballet student just after the war and performed at the re-opening of Covent Garden in 1946. He reached the rank of soloist in the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, and he married a young dancer, Pauline Wadsworth, who subsequently taught at White Lodge.

On tour with the Ballet to South Africa, he made a film on the long sea journey, in the style of a silent comedy, title cards and all; John Lanchbery, conductor for the Ballet, accompanied it on piano. (More than

40 years later, he composed the score for two of our silents.)

Gill left ballet in 1955 to go into films. He was one of the original employees of commercial television, working in the cutting rooms of Associated-Rediffusion. Among the documentaries he edited were two award-winning programmes, *Famine*, directed by Jack Gold, and *Children of the Revolution*, directed by Robert Kee.

In 1968 - somewhat out of character - he directed and edited *The Dave Clark Five Special*. That year he joined Thames Television as a director and made many documentaries for *This Week* in such risky places as Vietnam, South Africa and Northern Ireland. Jeremy Isaacs chose him to make a lyrical documentary on the Thames, *Till I End My Song*, which was nominated for Emmy and Bafta awards.

It was by a remarkable coincidence that I met him. My father was a commercial artist, specialising in the lettering for film posters in the 1940s. He admired no one so much as Eric Gill. As a child, I remember the name being invoked frequently, and I recall being taken by my parents to an exhibition of Gill sculpture. When, in 1975, Jeremy Isaacs asked me to work at Thames Television on a 13-part series about silent-era Hollywood and teamed me with the nephew of Eric Gill, I realised his selection was inspired.

David Gill told me that during the Second World War he had been in charge of film presentations at school, at Belmont Abbey, Hereford - the headmaster could not afford a sound projector so the boys saw silent films, just as at my school. David was put in charge of choosing the records - and, the school being Roman Catholic, he had the task of lowering a discreet cardboard shutter when, for instance, the nightclub dance in *Metropolis* be-

came too racy. (He learned to change focus sharply, so at least he could enjoy it!)

Even though this was ideal training, he needed a refresher course, so for weeks Gill came to my flat in Gloucester Road to watch everything from *America* (D.W. Griffith) to *Zaza* (Gloria Swanson). I was startled at the lack of response. I remember telling my wife, "I've tried everything. But I don't think the films are getting through to him." I blamed the corroding effect of television, but I could not have been more wrong. Gill was so impressed by the artistic standard of these long-forgotten films that he devoted the rest of his life to reviving them.

The British film industry is full of writer-director teams - Powell and Pressburger, Lauder and Gilliat - but in television such partnerships are regarded with suspicion. Because I was an established film historian, it was generally assumed that Gill was the sleeping partner. This was as ludicrous as it was unfair. He ran the show. He knew television, and could cope with the political as well as the aesthetic side. As a former editor, he had a formidable command of technique and the success of our first series - *Hollywood* (1980) - was due far more to him than to me.

I look back with embarrassment to the fact that I nearly turned the series down because I thought television people would have too little respect for the old pictures. David Gill was not just careful, he outdid me in a relentless search for accuracy. He had a mind like a lawyer and I used to wilt under his interrogations. But his line of questioning often revealed cracks in my research. He was also a powerful persuader. I defy anyone to have resisted once he had decided it was necessary to do something.

These powers of persuasion were responsible for a commercial television company staging my restoration of *Napoleon* (1927), a five-hour silent film with three-screen sequences and a score by Carl Davis. When people said, "Well, that was amazing, but you'll never get people into anything less spectacular", he and Carl Davis initiated regular public screenings of silent films with live orchestra - the Thames Silents, eventually to become the Channel Four Silents.

Gill and I worked on a number of documentaries for Thames - almost all devoted to silent films. Thames gave them what they needed - good publicity, slots at peak viewing time - and were rewarded with decent ratings and Emmys. Which company nowadays would subsidise three or four years' work on a series about silent films?

Take *Unknown Chaplin*, for instance. While working on Hollywood, we discovered films in the official Chaplin vault that had never been seen in public, and Lady Chaplin gave us permission to use them. It was Gill who turned this single discovery, momentous as it was, into an epic.

There was at that time a notorious Collector and Distributor whose methods had alienated almost everyone. He was a very peculiar person and an evening with him would have made a perfect ordeal in a Japanese television show. Every month without fail Gill would have dinner with this character for the sake of our work. The man would not even speak to me; I was tainted as a film collector; Gill on the other hand was "clean". One evening, Gill mentioned this Chaplin coup and the Collector asked how much had been found. About 30 cans, said Gill.

"Is that all?"



Find of the century: Gill, left, with his editor Trevor Waite, takes delivery of a cache of Charlie Chaplin rushes, 1981

"What do you mean, 'Is that all?'"

"I've got more than that."

"You've got more than that of what?"

"More than that of Chaplin..."

And so he made the Great Discovery - it took 18 months of delicate negotiation, which he had to do entirely alone. He was rewarded by the arrival of a pantechon from France piled with rusty cans. Inside he found 300,000ft of original camera negative of Chaplin's Mutual comedies - the outtakes, in rushes form. He soon realised that Chaplin rehearsed on film, and the rushes, once put in numerical order, turned out to be the equivalent of an artist's sketchbook. If ever there was the cinematic Find of

the Century, this was it. The result was our three-part series, *Unknown Chaplin*, which won an Emmy and a Peabody Award.

Gill was also responsible for the restoration of two of the most important films ever made - *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *The Gold Rush* (1925). *The Gold Rush* had been converted by Chaplin into a sound film with his own narration in 1942. The original material for the silent version had been discarded and no prints good enough for Live Cinema presentation survived. When a master-copy intended for Japan was discovered in the vaults, Gill undertook to put the film back as it had been in 1925, complete with intertitles made to match the original.

But he always felt the true act of restoration was returning the films to the theatre, and he laid great stress on the orchestral accompaniment, quoting King Vidor's comment that music was 50 per cent of the emotion. For *The Gold Rush*, Carl Davis adapted Chaplin's music for the 1942 reissue. For *The Birth of a Nation*, Jack Lanchbery adapted the 1915 Breit score. The hunt for the last surviving tinted print of the film was another epic quest, and the result will be shown at the Pordenone Silent Film Festival next month - in David Gill's honour.

Gill had a maddening habit: he was always 10 minutes late, unless it was an important event, when he was slightly later. And yet for rehearsals or

recordings when orchestras were involved he was religiously punctual (although when he was a dancer he once missed his cue and a *pas de deux* became a *pas d'un*). He would not brook interruption, and the normal to and fro of conversation was unknown to him. But he was very witty, remarkably generous (especially where credit was concerned - he always insisted my name came first) and he had the kind of integrity that seems to have vanished from our post-war world.

His latest project was to secure the new Sadler's Wells as a home for silent film; he also planned to present archival dance films with live accompaniment, so bringing his career full circle.

- Kevin Brownlow

George Owen

George Owen, jockey and racehorse trainer, born Ledsham, Cheshire 25 December 1907; married 1934 Margaret Done (four daughters); died Bridgnorth, Shropshire 29 September 1997.

It was not just as the trainer of some high-class steeplechasers that George Owen left his mark on the sport of National Hunt racing. Owen's Cheshire base was the springboard from which three champion jump jockeys, as well as a champion amateur, launched their careers.

The most famous jockey to graduate from the Owen ranks was Dick Francis, now better known as a world-famous author, although he will be also remembered as the jockey of the Queen Mother's Devon Loch, who inexplicably did the splits when about to win the Grand National.

As well as Francis, the other champion professionals to start their career with Owen were Tim Brookshaw and Stan Mellor. It was Mellor who partnered perhaps Owen's best horse as a trainer, Sandy Abbot, to victory in the 1963 National Two-Mile Champion Chase at the Cheltenham Festival. While Sandy Abbot was Owen's best horse as a trainer, it was another chaser, Russian Hero, who gave him his most famous victory when landing the Grand National in 1949.

He achieved a fair share of big race success as a rider, too, most notably when winning the Cheltenham Gold Cup in 1939, the last pre-war running of steeplechasing's Blue Riband event.

Owen was born on Christmas Day in 1907 in Ledsham, a village near Chester, and he was to spend his entire career, both as rider and trainer, based in the Cheshire area. Coming

as he did from a farming family, it was little surprise that Owen, who was educated at Ellesmere College in Shropshire, took an active interest from an early age in equine pursuits. His particular interest was hunting, and he was involved in the local Wirral Harriers from the age of 10.

He was only 18 when he started riding competitively as an amateur. His biggest success under that status came when winning the 1930 Cheltenham Foxhunters' Chase on Meller's Belle. While riding among the unpaid ranks, Owen also enjoyed a number of successes with the North Yorkshire trainer Walter Easterby, the uncle of the successful trainers Mick and Peter Easterby. Owen turned professional as a jockey in 1932.

Not long before war broke out, he had established an impressive reputation as a leading National Hunt rider. That reputation was capped with the

1939 Cheltenham Gold Cup victory of Brendan's Cottage. He was taking on the previous year's Gold Cup winner, Morse Code, but ran on well up the hill to defeat the defending champion by five lengths, the pair having jumped the last together. Cheltenham was a successful course for Owen, who also won that year's Grand Annual Chase with The Professor II.

He began training in 1945 with a small string based at Larche in Cheshire. It was a year later that his first jump jockey protégé, Dick Francis, recently demobilised from the RAF, joined him. Francis's first ride for the trainer was Russian Hero, who was at a stage of his racing career where his subsequent status of Grand National hero would have seemed far too fanciful.

In another ironic link between Francis and Russian Hero, the jockey had actually finished second to the Owen

chaser in the 1949 National, when he was riding a horse called Roimond. Earlier in both horse and jockey's careers, Francis had tended Russian Hero through the night to prevent an attack of colic becoming fatal.

Russian Hero, who had been regarded an unlikely stayer for the gruelling Aintree spectacular, was sent off a 66-1 outsider when winning the National. He fell at the first fence when trying to win the race for the second year running, an uncanny fate which has befallen other National winners such as Aldanti and Hallo Dandy.

The National was a race in which Owen made frequent attempts to repeat that success but never quite succeeded. Martinique was sixth for him in the 1956 National, while he had the second and fourth, Badanloch and Tea Friend, in 1960, the first year the race was televised live, when it was won by

Merryman II. Another of his National winners, Peacetown, who had won a smaller race over the famous fences, the Topham Trophy, led for much of the way in 1964, when he was third to Team Spirit and Purple Silk. Another again of Owen's best horses, Two Springs, started favourite for the 1970 National but fell at the third fence before going on to finish sixth to Specify in the 1971 running.

Owen, who trained for the 15 years of his career in Tiverton, also in Cheshire, was regarded as an extremely loyal man to work for. As well as starting the careers of Francis, Brookshaw, and Mellor, he also provided a great deal of success for the champion amateur rider Steve Davenport.

After his retirement he acted as a steward at Haydock and Liverpool, two local tracks at which he had enjoyed a great deal of success.

- Richard Griffiths



Russian Hero, trained by Owen and ridden by Leo McMorrough, jumps to victory at the 1949 Grand National. Another of Owen's jockeys, Dick Francis, finished second

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorials, Weddings, Anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1, Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, telephoned to 071-293 2001 or faxed to 071-293 2000, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (weddings, marriages, funerals) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line (VAT extra). They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

Lectures

National Gallery: Frances Homan, "Hogarth (I), *Highlife* and *Lowlife*: the Harlots' and the Rake's Progresses", 1pm.
Victoria and Albert Museum: Anna Contadini, "The Arabesque in Islamic Art (I)", 2.30pm.
Tate Gallery: Jonathan Blackwood, "A Sculptural Independence: Eric Gill", 1pm.
British Museum: Susan Woodford, "How Greek Vases Were Used", 1.15pm.
National Portrait Gallery: Jenny Uglow, "William Hogarth: politics and impolite portraits", 1.10pm.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen plans to meet members of the voluntary organisations who helped with the preparations for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, and with the collection and distribution of the flowers laid by members of the public at the funeral.

Changing of the Guard
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment will march the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. F Company Scots Guards march the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.15am. Head provided by the Irish Guard.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr A. B. Holmes and Miss R. L. Cokes
The engagement is announced between Archibald, son of Mr and Mrs J. A. Holmes, of Benenden, Kent, and Rachel, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs J. E. A. Cokes, of Hambrook, Bristol.

Birthdays

Mr Trevor Brooking, footballer, 49; Lord Davies, Chairman, Welsh National Opera, 57; Miss Anna Ford, broadcaster, 54; Mr Peter Frank, pianist, 62; Sir John Gurdon, Master, Magdalen College, Cambridge, 64; Mr Peter Hobson, former Headmaster, Charterhouse School, 53; Col Sir Walter Luttrell, former Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, 78; Miss Jan Don McLean, singer, 52; Miss Jan Morris, writer, 71; Mr Vivian Ridler, former Printer to Oxford University, 84; The Right Rev Lord Runcie, former Archbishop of Canterbury, 76; The Right Rev Roger Seabury, Bishop of Barking, 61; Sir Richard Scott, Vice-Chancellor of the Supreme Court, 63; Sting (Mr Gordon Sumner), musician, 46; Mr Gary Streeter MP, 42; Mr Duncan Thomson, Keeper, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 63; Vice-Admiral Sir Anthony Tippet, former Chief of Fleet Support, 69; Mr Sam Whitwright, former deputy chairman, Post Office, 73; Lt-Col Eric Wilson VC, 85.

Anniversaries

Births: Richard III, King, 1452; Mikhail Yuryevich Lermontov, poet,

1814; Paul Ludwig Hans von Bockendorff von Hindenburg, field marshal and statesman, 1847; Julius "Groucho" Marx, comedian, 1890; Budd Abbot, comedian, 1895; Henry Graham Greene, novelist, 1904; Deane Bennett Andran, artist and engraver, 1721; Sir Thomas Johnstone Lipton, sportsman and merchant, 1871; Marie Stopes, birth control pioneer, 1878; Marcel Duchamp (Henri-Pierre Roche), Surrealist painter, 1896; Rock Hudson (Roy Fitzgerald Scherer), actor, 1925. On this day: Saladin entered Jerusalem, 1187; Rome became the capital city of Italy, 1870; the Mormon leader Brigham Young was arrested for bigamy, 1871; the first rugby match was played at Twickenham, 1900; Abyssinia (Ethiopia) was invaded by Italy, 1935; the British Council received a Royal Charter, 1940; after colliding with the Queen Mary liner, the British cruiser *Cunepio* sank off the coast of Donagall, with the loss of 338 lives, 1942; Guinea became an independent republic, 1958; Neil Kinnock became leader of the Labour Party, 1983. Today is the Feast Day of St Eleutherius of Nicomedia, The Guardian Angels and St Leger or Leodegarius.

Luncheons

Association of Foreign Affairs Journalists
Mr Gabor Szecsenyi, Hungarian Ambassador, was the guest of honour at a luncheon held yesterday by the Association of Foreign Affairs Journalists at the Gray House, London W1. Mr Jonathan Fryer, President of the Association, was in the chair.

LAW REPORT: 2 OCTOBER 1997

No remand of young offenders to adult prisons

The Home Secretary had no general power to detain young offenders in an adult prison or remand centre pending allocation to a young offender institution, and a policy which made that a routine practice was unlawful.

Regina v Ayrington Youth Court and others, ex parte F; Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Sedley and Auld JJ) 22 August 1997

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court quashed a warrant of commitment committing the applicant, who was aged 16, to Risley Remand Centre after she had been sentenced to 8 months' detention in a young offender institution for a number of offences.

Jan Wise (Clyde Chappell & Boham, Solicitors) for the applicant; Robin Tam (Treasury Solicitor) for the respondents.

Mr Justice Sedley said that

there was no allocation centre for females in the prison system which was designated as a young offender institution, nor was there any female young offender institution as such in the country. There were five women's prisons of which parts had been designated young offender institutions, and it was to those that girls aged 15 to 17 were or should be allocated.

There was a conflict of evidence about what had happened to the applicant between her arrival at Risley and release on bail two weeks later, which the court had not been called upon to resolve. Their Lordships simply recorded their anxiety at the issues it raised about the possibility of close and unsupervised contact between a young offender who would by definition be in some measure disturbed and adult women prisoners whose range of possible deviances needed no elaboration.

Section 1C(2) of the Criminal Justice Act 1982, as amended, provided:

The Secretary of State may from time to time direct that an offender sentenced to detention in a young offender institution or to custody for life shall be detained in a prison or remand centre instead of a young offender institution, but if he is under 18 at the time of the direction, only for a temporary purpose.

It was contended for the respondents that the power contained in that section was exercised from day to day by the reception staff at Risley as delegates of the Home Secretary, against the background of the relevant circular instruction, *The Allocation of Female Offenders*.

Annex B to the circular instruction directed those who had been authorised to carry out the Home Secretary's functions to do so according to listed criteria. The important one for present purposes was (e), which in terms permitted

young offenders following sentence to be held in a remand centre, namely a prison, for allocation purposes. Since there was nowhere else in the prison system where allocation of young offenders could take place, no discretion whatever was being delegated to the Home Secretary's officers. The question was whether that was lawful.

It was clear from the terms of section 1C that it was not. The power of the Home Secretary, and therefore that of his designated officers, to depart from the provision for allocation to a young offender institution was limited to permission "from time to time [to] direct that an offender... shall be detained in a prison or remand centre... for a temporary purpose" if under 18.

That phraseology made plain that Parliament was authorising the Home Secretary on occasion to place a particu-

lar offender under the age of 18 temporarily in a prison or remand centre. It did not authorise him to make it a practice to do so; it did not authorise him to give such a direction in relation to offenders generally; and it did not authorise him to keep them in a prison or remand centre for however long it took (possibly the whole length of the sentence) to make a lawful placement in a young offender institution.

The practice not only permitted but enjoined by the combination of the circular instruction and the total non-availability of any young offender institution to which newly sentenced female young offenders could be sent was a violation of the principle contained in section 1C(1) of the 1982 Act and an excess of the powers contained in section 1C(2).

- Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

Universities need more money. Why fudge the fees issue?



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Kids and their parents look around at jobs and they look at qualifications. They don't need the mantra of modernisation, chanted loud in Brighton this week, to see that our kind of society and economy increasingly rewards the highly educated. They make rational assessments of prospects, which explains why tuition fees have had no effect on young people's intentions to apply to university. Graduates and those with vocational qualifications are paid more and therefore should pay more. The elementary justice of that explains why - whatever Labour conference delegates may think - public reception of the government's plans has been so warm.

Yet it seems to have been Labour activists rather than the public to whom Labour leaders have been listening. Which is why a golden opportunity for securing the finances of educational expansion at the post-18 level for the long haul has only been half-grasped.

The dimensions of the problem are these. Universities can be squeezed to make them more efficient, and have been. Universities and colleges can do more to attract private sector money. Some have been remarkably successful, and not only Oxbridge. But significantly more places can only be paid for by extra public subvention or a larger contribution from students. What the Dearing Committee offered the Government, albeit tentatively, was a way to do something the Tories, for all their fine words, had fudged: to readjust the balance of payments between individual students (for whom there is unquestionably a personal benefit measurable in higher lifetime earnings) and the body of taxpayers at large. It was a poor report, because it should have been much more sharply focused, in order to achieve more persuasive public impact.

David Blunkett's plan could and should have been much more radical in shifting the balance further towards the personal

beneficiary. He is asking students to pay £1,000 towards their tuition, and even that obligation will fall in full on only a fraction. The "extra" money produced - assuming taxpayer contributions continue at broadly the present rate - might in theory finance some growth in student numbers. But here now is the Prime Minister pledging further expansion: 500,000 extra places by 2002. Mr Blair's ambition is praiseworthy. It is completely at one with his vision of a competitive, achieving Britain. The trouble is, it can only be paid for by a much more ambitious recasting of the basic finances of higher education.

Even if a large proportion of these extra places are to be found in that archipelago of local colleges labelled "further education", where will the incremental finance come from? Post-18 FE students pay fees. Some, for example the unemployed who will get training as part of Labour's New Deal, will have fees reimbursed from money that is already allo-

cated. But for the rest the only option is full-cost fees - which part-timers already pay - making any expansion self-financing. That would work only if FE students could rely on some marked increase in employers' willingness to pay for their training, or like their university contemporaries, could tap into a loans scheme.

If the places Mr Blair envisions are to be found from expanding the universities of Cambridge, Coventry or Cornwall (still barely an embryo), students would have to meet a higher proportion of their course costs. Where else would the extra come from? Let's lightly skip over the technical point that more loans mean more public expenditure in the short run. Let's face instead the tricky question of whether those three universities should even be under the same funding regime.

World-class Cambridge does in fact charge more for its college-based tuition; its system offends the Labour dogma that differential fees are unacceptable.

But why shouldn't Cambridge and University College, London and similar institutions seek to preserve their qualities by demanding more from students? Does Mr Blunkett really want Old Labour egalitarian misery-sharing. Again, the way forward has to be a re-examination of the loans scheme. Cambridge and suchlike places do offer a superior education. It can be open to all only if everyone has equal access to the means to pay for it - that is to say a loan they can repay from their enhanced lifetime earnings.

Tony Blair's instinct is absolutely right. The question he has posed his ministers, especially his Chancellor, is how to pay for it. Many Labour MPs may believe that the Blunkett tuition fees scheme is a scarcely "hard choice". Actually it is only a pigeon step nearer the solution. Labour leaders may have thought the debate on fees was fraught, but sooner rather than later they are going to have to return to their conference with far more dramatic changes.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor
and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

New Liberal Blair?

Sir: Donald Macintyre ("An impatient leader fast outgrowing his party", 1 October) believes that Tony Blair's aim is to reunite his party with British Liberalism.

The trouble is that the territory into which he has taken New Labour is every bit as alien to Liberals as it is to Socialists. Beveridge, Keynes and Lloyd George, for instance, supported a form of pragmatic interventionism in the economy that contrasts starkly with the gung-ho approach to the free market which the current Chancellor espouses.

Similarly, Labour's social policy, with its curfews and compulsory home-school contracts, suggests that they regard the people as a recalcitrant bunch in need of discipline from the professional élite which they now represent. This dismal view could hardly be further from the libertarian and egalitarian spirit with which the best of British Liberalism has always been infused.

If Mr Blair wishes to gain Liberal support, he should begin by behaving more like a Liberal himself.

JONATHAN CALDER
Market Harborough,
Leicestershire

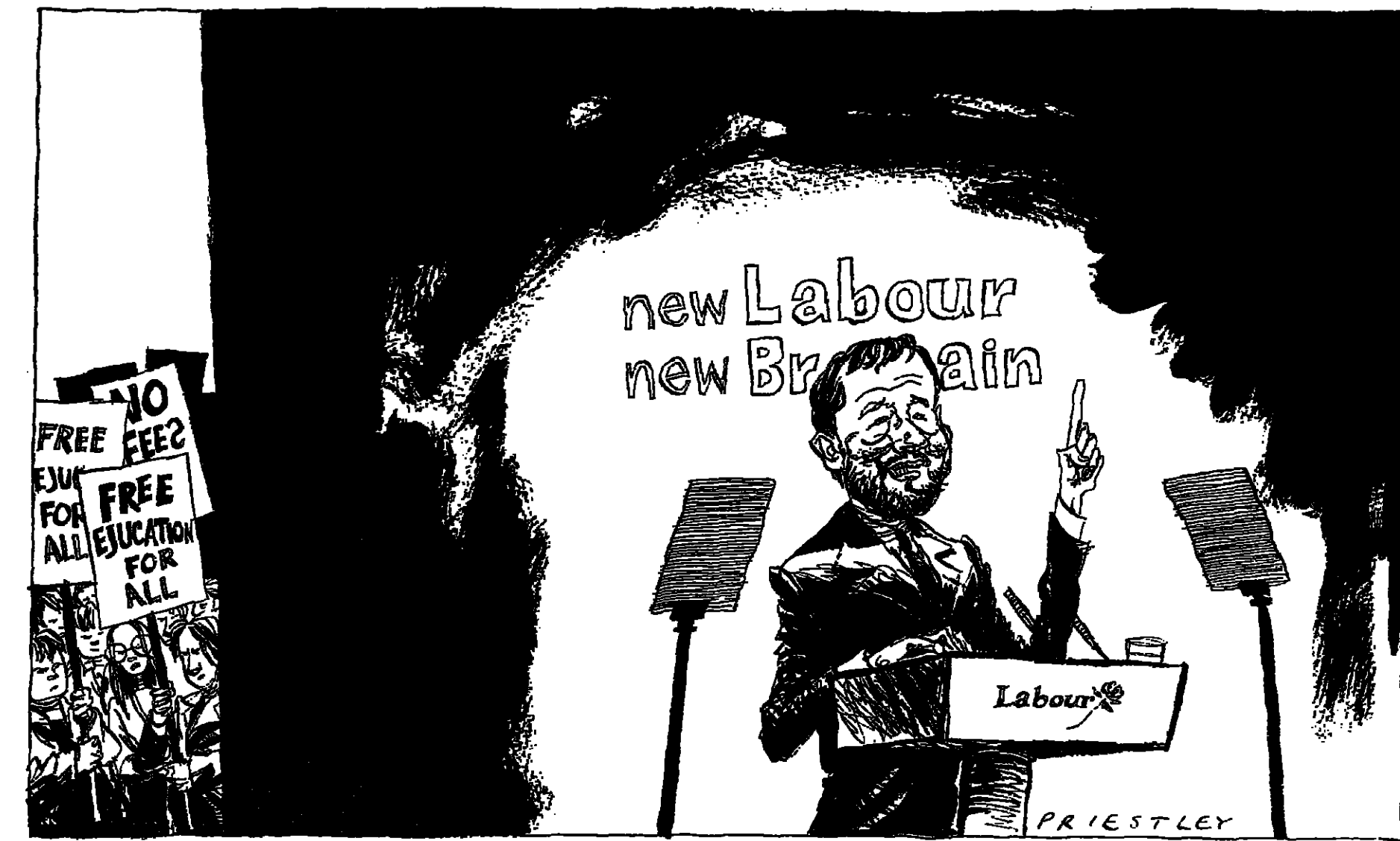
Sir: I was outraged to be prevented from taking part in the fringe discussion "Sport for all" at the Grand Hotel on Tuesday evening, at which Tony Banks was speaking.

Unable to penetrate Fortress Labour, a large fence stretching along a section of Brighton's seafront, I was directed to an office 15 minutes away to obtain the necessary pass. There they wanted personal details for a 20-minute police check, passport photographs and a £5 fee. Not surprisingly I didn't make the discussion.

It is a bizarre interpretation of a fringe discussion when sufficient bureaucratic barriers are erected to deny access for the public. It seems Blair's Britain is only open to some people. Those of us who do not have the right credentials are not allowed a voice.

ALEX STANDISH
Hove, East Sussex

Sir: I share with Paul Moore (Letters, 1 October) a sense of unease about the photograph of



Tony Blair in a Brighton church, but for a different reason.

The nature of the picture would suggest that it was taken with the permission, if not encouragement, of those concerned. It reinforces my distaste for the way in which Mr Blair seems to use his religion to claim the moral high ground. Whilst he is free to believe whatever he likes, I do wish Mr Blair would keep his Christianity to himself, and get on with the job of being a politician; if I want to hear a sermon, I will go to church.

BRIAN R MOORE
Exeter

Midwives cut

Sir: One-to-One Midwifery Care, an innovative scheme for mothers and babies in west London, which reaches many deprived groups and is loved by those who use it, is to be cut if health commissioners have their way. Why? Not because it

is expensive but because it is seen as a soft target for further health cuts.

The scheme means that most women have care in labour from a midwife they know well, and also have "continuity of care" during pregnancy and after the birth. One-to-One midwives carry a personal caseload of women with backup from their partner and, when necessary, others in the group practice. This is different from "team midwifery" where several midwives all have equal responsibility for a much larger number of women and there is less chance to build a relationship of confidence and trust. The health authority concerned is now planning to introduce a team scheme.

The underlying problem is that unrealistic ratios of midwives to births are set as a short-term, cash-saving measure. It is scandalous that expensive - and often useless or even dangerous -

technology is used more and more each year regardless of the growing cost or evidence of effectiveness. Yet asking for support from a familiar midwife on that special day in your life when you give birth is apparently too much to ask.

MARY NEWBURN
National Childbirth Trust
CHRISTINE GOWDRIDGE
Maternity Alliance
BEVERLY BEECH
Association for Improvement
in the Maternity Services
London W3

Behaving badly

Sir: No, Suzanne Moore, it is not "fine for men to be shameless shaggers and hustlers" ("So why is it all right for men to grow old disgracefully?", 1 October). Instead of championing vulgarity in women you should consider chastising the braying coarseness of some men, stirred on by the money-hungry media.

Dignity and wisdom are generally regarded as admirable and desirable. At present however, the media seem to be able to call the shots on what is worthwhile behaviour. Pleas for the further coarsening of women will not make them, or our society, any happier.

IAN FLINTOFF
London SW6

Dearing's figures

Sir: Although the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education is no more, I would like to offer a personal response to your report "How Dearing's numbers fail to add up" (26 September).

Naturally, I am disappointed that figures from one of the researchers we commissioned included some errors. The key observation remains unchanged: that around 90 per cent of part-time students are in employment. (We were well

aware from other sources that a much lower proportion of Open University students are employed.) The committee concluded that there were good reasons why those in employment should not be seen as the highest priority for additional public subsidies. There are other even more pressing needs in higher education. Such subsidies would risk substituting for existing employer contributions. And remember that part-time programmes are already heavily subsidised through grants to universities and colleges.

The committee was nevertheless concerned that would-be part-time students who are unemployed should not be denied higher education. We therefore proposed that they should have their fees waived and I welcome the Government's recent announcement that this will happen. We also recommended that social security benefits should be looked

at again to aid participation by those who are unemployed.

You wrongly assert that the committee concluded that employers should not be expected to contribute more to the costs of part-time higher education. We specified areas where employers should contribute more - especially towards the growth of programmes of continuing professional development for their employees. We identified Individual Learning Accounts as a potentially useful way of harnessing employer contributions for this and other purposes. This is an idea which has to be pursued in the context of broader education and training policies and not just for higher education.

Sir RON DEARING
Chairman
The National Committee of
Inquiry
into Higher Education
London W11

Fight for forests

Sir: It is not difficult to find people to blame for the ecological disaster in the Indonesian forests: the Indonesian government, which turns a blind eye to the activities of the logging companies; the logging companies who exploit the forests which used to be the homes of native peoples and wildlife; the peasants who slash and burn.

They are all easy to blame but hard to influence. Other culprits lie much closer to hand: the British government which takes little or no action; UK companies which import tropical hardwoods; and the British man and woman in the street who buys hardwood window frames for a conservatory or a hardwood table or lavatory seat.

We cannot put the fires out today, but by avoiding these products ourselves and applying pressure to importing companies and our government we may be able to reduce the chances of them happening in the future.

DAVID ROBINSON
Burton on Trent, Staffordshire

Poor grammar

Sir: Although I disagree with much that Colin McCabe writes in his review of John Honey's *Language is Power* (27 September), he raises an interesting point, when he claims that "How to teach grammar without the traditional notions of 'correctness' is perhaps one of the burning questions of our time - but it is too hot for academics to handle".

At the University of Kent some of us have been trying to do precisely this for at least the last ten years. However, because of financial exigencies within the university as a whole, the section responsible for running the programme is being closed down. Ironically, the programme could have been saved had the School of English been prepared to accommodate us. Unfortunately, they too felt that the teaching of English grammar was an unnecessary luxury. Yet again, English graduates, many of whom will probably become English teachers, are being deprived of a working knowledge of their own language.

TONY BEX
Senior Lecturer in English
Language and Linguistics
University of Kent at
Canterbury

Rugby: the startling evidence behind Britain's hidden drugs craze



MILES
KINGSTON

Dangerously Addictive Activities: A New Health Series

No 1: Playing rugby.

Is rugby bad for you? Well, of course it is, but only in the way that all sport is, ultimately, bad for you. Or is playing rugby bad for you in a special way?

Science is now coming to believe that there is something particularly dangerous about rugby, and that it - more than any other game - is addictive, and can lead to seriously disturbed behaviour.

Consider the evidence. Rugby players will always tell you that rugby is good for you, that it makes you fit. The evidence, of course, shows the exact opposite - that rugby causes you all sorts of horrific

injuries which leave you at the end of your career with old broken bones, cauliflower ears, a damaged brain and so on.

Oh, yes, but that is all part of life, say rugby players. You can break a bone doing anything. When you are not injured, you are as fit as can be.

When you are not injured... In fact, rugby players are not uninjured very often. They almost always have nagging strains and hamstring worries. Some players are on the injured list as much as the team list. When they are playing, they feel really well and forget their injuries, but this is because they get a buzz from the game which gives them a lift.

Get a buzz... Gives them a lift...

Very reminiscent of the world of drugs, is it not? And scientists are now coming to believe that rugby is a mildly hallucinatory activity, which gives people a high and a heightened sense of reality.

Or do we mean a distorted sense of reality?

Consider the facts. For 80 minutes 30 grown men run up and down a muddy field convinced that: a) an oval ball is a sensible shape; b) it is good to throw a ball backwards but bad to throw it forwards; c) it is normal to put your arms round other men and insert your head between their buttocks, then push as hard as possible;

d) it is good fun to risk having your teeth knocked out by clashing running men round the knees...

These are just a few of the things which a rugby player believes during a game, though he does not believe or do any of them at any other time.

It stands to reason that his grasp of reality is skewed. The average rugby player will also pretend to understand and obey a series of regulations which make no sense to anyone else. Recently, the RFU has been adding rules about "coming in from the wrong side" and "not releasing the ball" and "going over the top" which are virtually impossible to work out in cold blood, let alone in an active game.

Yet the average player never disputes these rules, so fuddled is he by the effect the game has on him. When he has the ball in his arms, and is tackled, and finds himself lying pinned under 10 or 12 heavy men, and then hears the referee penalising him for not releasing the ball (which is physically impossible), the sensible reaction would be, if not to punch the ref on the nose, at least dispute the sense of it. The rugby player takes it like a lamb.

Such suppression is dangerous, and may explain the bouts of violence which erupt during games, and very often after the game. Luckily, rugby players' vision must be affected by the game as well, as they scarcely

ever land an effective punch, but it is undeniable that such socially destructive behaviour is caused by the game itself. If this fighting were not caused by rugby, it would also sometimes break out before the game as well. But it never does!

Take into account these other factors which spring from the dependent state to which rugby reduces its addicts:

1) Players generally refuse to wear protective clothing, even though they know they will be injured sooner or later.
2) So anxious are they to get the "buzz" associated with the game that many players go on playing until late in life, well after the age at which it would be sensible to give it up.
3) They persist in saying that the

game will make a man out of you, even though the evidence suggests that it will make a cripple out of you.

4) Do you really think a grown man would run at full speed at a pile of other grown men in order to push them off the ball even though he knows he cannot do it, if he were not heavily hallucinating?

Next time you feel tempted to play rugby, think of all these things and then say to yourself: "I don't have to if I don't want to. I don't have to hurt myself for the sake of an oval ball. I don't HAVE to believe that it is bad to throw a ball forward."

It could save your life. Coming next: Is telephoning addictive? Should it be made illegal?

Yesterday's man must
put his wig on the table

DAVID
AARONOVITCH
ON MO AND
MANDY

"In my view," said the Prime Minister on the *Today* programme yesterday, "he is one of the most extraordinary and talented people in British politics. It is not just the Labour Party that is lucky to have him, it's the country that's lucky to have him... I think he's a great guy and he's got a great future."

The paragon in question was Peter Mandelson, rebuffed on Monday in his attempt to be elected to Labour's National Executive. The Labour Party had not felt that he was quite enough of a great guy, and the country (as yet) shows little sign of understanding its enormous good fortune. Mr Blair - usually so adept at capturing the popular mood - was dealing with a gulf in perceptions.

How might he have explained this to himself? Was it down to some piece of mass false consciousness - with the attitudes of the ordinary person shaped by inaccurate and lazy journalism? Conceivably. God alone knows that the normative nature of the British press makes it quite possible that a loose characterisation made one year will stick for ever. (The image of Machiavelli, the Prince of Spin has been immensely seductive.) But even allowing for such intellectual sloppiness, it is nevertheless very hard to make such a label stick, if there is no truth in it whatsoever. There are many who consider themselves to have been badly or roughly treated by Peter Mandelson - run over, if you like, as he steamed towards the main goal. For Mr Blair - object always of Mandelson's attention and charm - it may be hard to imagine what those who bear the tyre tracks really feel.

Perhaps Mr Blair accepts instead this week's dominant theory: that the NEC election result saw Mandelson suffering from Blairism. According to this, he acted as a conduit for the party's suppressed frustration at the necessary discipline that had been imposed upon them, and the painful changes that had helped catapult them into government. Blair was untouchable; his counsellor, however, could safely be lynched. Again, there must be a measure of truth in this. But on the same day - Monday - there was one standing ovation given to a successful candidate for the

Executive - Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam, a woman who is in no sense Old Labour. There is no obvious matter of substance on which she differs from Peter Mandelson or her leader.

So what is it about Mowlam that generates such affection; affection denied to her influential colleague? It is, of course, her personality. It is obvious to anyone from the way she answers questions, her tactility, her expressions of self-doubt, her unfinished sentences and her hesitation, that Mowlam is spontaneous and generous - an organic politician. Like the wig on the table. Nothing is hidden.

Mowlam suggests an inclusive and open politics, whose greatest danger is naivety, not megalomania. Mandelson, by contrast, never suggests naivety. In public he appears to be a creature of calculation and angles. His suits are superb, his shoes shined to a high polish, his hair seems to be slicked back. He answers interviewer's questions with an exaggerated exactness, even those which are personal. You believe that you see only that which he thinks it advantageous for you to see.

A classic example was Mandelson's own reaction to his defeat. "A touch of humility is good for everyone," he told us, "particularly a politician, and particularly me". This is no good. Humility - by its nature - is not something that you can boast about. You cannot imagine such a phrase coming from Mowlam's lips.

This does not mean that Mandelson is insincere in wishing to reinvent himself. He is a far more thoughtful and innovative man than almost all of his government colleagues. His instincts, like Blair's, are amazingly acute, and it is for those qualities that he now wishes to be known. The almost stifling single-mindedness of the last soul-crushing two-year-long election campaign now over, he can let the world see his strategic side.

But this is no longer enough. The Diana fortnight showed just how great is the popular hunger for authenticity, for a genuineness of emotion. The minor corruptions of the last government included the fact that they answered every question with regard to how they would look, rather than with any interest in the truth. This - the politics of small, self-perpetuating male groups, exacerbated by the conspiratorial relationship that exists between politicians and many political journalists (the spinners and those willing to be spun) - is not acceptable any more. If perished somewhere between May 1st and Althorp.

So - all of a sudden - the personification of the modernisation process himself looks strangely out of tune with the times. He seems to be an Eighties and Nineties figure, where Mo better captures the spirit of the millennium. The thing is, pluralism is not just a matter of what you say. It may not even simply be a matter of what you do. It's what you are. Or, to borrow a phrase from the early days of the feminist movement - the personal is the political. A new dawn had broken, has it not?



Delegates at Brighton yesterday

Photograph: Brian Harris

Over the Häagen-Dazs the talk
is all of the end of poverty

POLLY
TOYNEBEE
THE REAL
AGENDA

There is only one game in town - the "underclass" and how to kill it off, throttle it at birth, ethnically cleanse it into oblivion. The ideas buzz through every airless corridor and jam-packed bar.

Wherever two or more people are gathered together, wherever clumps and cabals cluster around ministers, the key words waft up into the air as you pass by - sink estates, homelessness, crime, unemployment, deserts, out-of-control children, poor pensioners. Words like welfare, Wisconsin, worklessness are sprinkled with the latest statistics. Newest pilot scheme results are swapped eagerly. What works? How do you do it? How do you pay for it? It's all they want to talk about.

And all this is from a Labour Party said to have lost its soul in the attempt to keep Middle

England and the *Daily Mail* happy. They have performed this trick by talking publicly about "the family" or crime to satisfy the punitive and moralising tendency, while in reality working to end poverty. Talk loudly, but carry a very small stick.

But this is no longer an age for big political ideas or sweeping grand plans. It is pocket calculator politics, micro-policies, micro-management - what works, only what works. Each "underclass" denizen must be helped into work, cajoled, coerced, encouraged back into mainstream life. Not in the old ways with giant imaginary levers of policy devised by macro-economists to alter hypothetical patterns of human behaviour. It's about each person having a personal adviser on the ground, someone to see them through the fog of hopelessness and the maze of overlapping bureaucracies.

I came across a plethora of ideas and plans from virtually every department. Ministers and their juniors talk breathlessly like newly trained social workers, starchy-eyed, full of hope that leaves some wise old heads worried about the dangers of their future disillusion.

First there is the new Downing Street Social Exclusion Unit, designed to drive policies across departments, partly in Whitehall but mainly knocking heads together on the ground. They will target the nation's 1,370 worst estates, where 40 per cent of all crime is com-

mitted. Unemployment is no longer regional, but in such small, local jobless blackspots. Each now has been invited to bid to become Employment Zones and Health Action Zones, to embrace everything that moves and breathes in one area - jobs, training, buses to work, health, crime, drugs and sink schools. In their eyes you see the visions of new Jerusalem rising from the ashes of hell-hole estates. Great if it works, but it won't be easy.

But at least after all these years of governments massaging figures to reduce the size of the unemployed register, this government is actively seeking out those not on it. That means setting themselves far higher targets of numbers into work - among them the million extra people Harriet Harman says are now claiming sickness benefit. People have become no filler in the last decade: many of these are men in their forties and fifties, the hidden unemployed pushed off the register to waste their lives on sickness benefit at a cost of millions.

Yet it may not be easy to get them to return to work in the way that the single parents have been persuaded. (Pilots apparently show that one in three single parents is returning to work after just one interview.) Can the same be done for the sick? Gordon Brown's surprise new target of full employment will mean creating government jobs in intractable areas. What sort of jobs? One plan is for the police

to run local crime prevention teams, enlisting local people on estates to patrol and protect their own area, under police training and management. If it sounds alarmingly like Guardian Angels or vigilantes, you are reassured with the insistence that it works in Holland.

There is plenty of the unthinkable too. Whispering lest Barbara Castle hears, there are those who dare suggest that the whole national insurance paraphernalia is a vastly expensive anachronism, invented 50 years ago for a very different society. Not now, but some time it may be right to take the state pension away from the richer pensioners to give to the grindingly poor. And isn't it time to filch the fat tax relief on pensions for the rich? No, behind the scenes they are not faint-hearted.

There was something vaguely threatening about the tone of Tony Blair's announcement of a new ministerial group on the family, yet behind the scenes the talk is of a radical scheme to tax partners together again, redistribute the savings and double the rate of child benefit - which would offer the biggest single step out of unemployment for many women.

All this and more is in the air, some happening soon, some later, some maybe never. Meanwhile trouble has blown up over Frank Field's role. He has taken upon himself an almost impossible task - to de-

vise a grand overarching welfare reform that smacks more of the old politics than the new. Divesting himself of all other tasks, he is spending night and day drafting a Green Paper that may (or may not) appear next Christmas. He is saying nothing to anyone (not even his colleagues, alarmingly) about what's in it. He told me, he wants it to be a Big Bang. It will be, he says, a "philosophy of welfare".

Yet as he writes, that philosophy is being written on the ground all around him, his pen racing to keep up with what everyone else is actually doing. That may be why he has been dangerously, publicly thrashing around of late, having promised magic big solutions in a micro policy world. What works is all that counts now.

In all this, the government is taking a noble but high risk strategy: these social problems are deep-seated, expensive and from the experience of other Labour governments, profoundly intractable. The Government is asking to be judged on its ability to transform the people who are the most difficult to change. Huge effort makes small change in the underclass. Will they keep up their infectious enthusiasm when some schemes fail miserably? Do they have the stamina to pick themselves up and start all over again and again and again? At least if the economy is half as good as promised, then they have the best chance ever of succeeding.

Make way, please, medical emergency, I'm a famous photojournalist



JOHN
WALSH

For those who may have begun to doubt the integrity, the dignity, the - what shall we call it? - moral focus of the world's press photographers, Russell Miller's excellent new book, *Magnificent: Fifty Years at the Frontline of History*, is a fine corrective. His chronicle of the last plane-out adventures, the war correspondents and the monochrome dreamers who snapped every telling moment of public conflict from the Spanish Civil War to Rwanda, and set up an elite agency to sell their eye-

startling dispatches, is a record of bold achievement and ethical rigour. Robert Capa at the D-Day landings, George Rodger's Nuba tribesmen in the Sudan, Eliot Erwit's shot of Richard Nixon prodding the chest of Nikita Khrushchev (the Russian premier was telling the American cold warrior to go screw his grandmother) - well, it's all a head-shakingly long way from the ghostly paparazzi, the long-lens Peeping Toms and roadside ghouls who photograph dying celebrities, impede the rescue services, then fill the pages of Europe's image-hungry magazines with their gruesome *write* intrusions. Ah, the Golden Age. Those were the days...

But wait one goddamned minute. What is this on page 44? It's an assignment undertaken at the end of the war by the American writer John Malcolm Brinnin, (to travel across the States with Henri Cartier-Bresson, the undisputed God of modern photojournalism. What pulls you up short is Miller's description of "an incident in a diner, when one of the customers suffered an epileptic fit and Cartier-Bresson managed to get in the way, in his determination to get pictures of the frothing victim". Brinnin claimed the Frenchman was furious when anyone got in his own way - at one point he apparently pushed Brinnin to the ground in his anxiety not to miss a picture...

Nice, eh? Would it be disrespectful to wonder how the godfather of arty photo-reportage would have reacted, had he stumbled on a car crash in the Pont de L'Alma, a famous

princess and a lot of irritatingly intrusive medics?

How peculiar to find that the site of one of my dreams is to pack up. After 80 years, they're closing the burns and plastics unit at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton, perhaps to relocate it at the Chelsea and Westminster, perhaps not. It's rare for a hospital unit to achieve global fame, but the surgeons at Queen Mary's were legendary brilliant. I worked there as a porter in my teens, and loved it. I liked the rumours that would fly around, concerning the Famous James Bond Actor in C ward, who was in to have the bags under his eyes removed. We would josh scapolamine-dazed, plastic surgery patients, on their way to the operating theatre, that a five-quid tip would guarantee they'd



Dog breath: Jean Cauldwell, left, with Stringfellow whom she resuscitated, and owner Jean Robinson

wake up with an unscheduled chin dimple, a lowered hair-line, a nine-inch member... I'd take the little girls from J Ward to the theatre to have their bat ears pinned back, and find them later in the Recovery Room, heads swathed in a bandage turban with a wisp of

blonde hair peeping out... Ah, but it was also a place of nightmare: G Ward, home of the burns patients, a place of uncomfortable heat, the patients lying under raised sheets so their flesh wouldn't stick to it. It had its own porters, specially insured to terrible sights, so we weren't required - until one night, when there was no one but me to collect a victim. The long, long walk - trolley before me - down the endless corridor to G Ward, mentally running away from what one was about to endure, has haunted me ever since. And now they're closing it. Goodbye to my own personal Room 101.

Is it the unseasonal weather, or some unconscious inter-species rivalry that is causing the current wave of European canine phobia? Judging by the papers, no dog is safe from abduction, attack, counter-attack or unnatural feats of resuscitation. My one-year-old Labrador, Poppy, a keen browser of the news pages, has taken to flattening herself against the washing machine and feigning invisibility whenever the doorbell rings.

And well she might. Over in Italy, a Sicilian politician called Nero has offered to pay bounty hunters the equivalent of £18 for the head of any stray dog (that means any dog on the streets of Palermo is up for

grabs). On the Croatian coast, a family poodle called Zeni was grabbed around the throat by a pitbull's jaws, and the pitbull savaged in turn by the poodle's lady owner who sank her fangs into the dog's neck. If only the pitbull owner had been around, and retaliated in similar vein, we could have had a spectacular, Draculan daisy-chain...

Down Derby way, meanwhile, one Jean Cauldwell has been explaining her prompt action to save a choking rotweiler called Stringfellow: "I put my fingers up her nostrils and opened her mouth as wide as I could and then put my mouth inside hers. I started blowing and, all of a sudden, I felt her heart start and we saw her move" - presumably in the direction of someone who could counsel her about Surviving the Trauma of Unwarrented Snogging by Derbyshire Humanoids. Between Mafiosi bounty hunters, English nostril abusers and Slavic vampires, a dog doesn't stand an earthly these days.

All over the journalistic metropolis in the last 10 days, you could hear a collective sigh of melancholy for Ruth Picardie, who died of cancer last week, and a wave of sympathy for her husband and two-year-old twins. Ruth was a writer of exceptional directness, always sceptical, always challenging, always taking the mick, and she was like that with people, too. She went out of her way to find out what they thought about things, and why. Appalled to find some vestigial shred of male chauvinism in one's conversation, she would beat it out

of you with a rhetorical rolled umbrella, laughing fit to bust at the foolishness of men. She had a thousand friends, who took their cue from her. I remember once gaily attending a preview of *Showgirls*, the atrocious movie about Las Vegas strip-



Ruth Picardie: writer of exceptional directness

pers, only to find that Ruth was occupying the row behind me with a dozen cronies, who rubbished the ensuing distobings with derisive hysteria.

A big, sexy woman with a vast and lazy smile, a great jungle of hair in her heyday and a trick of looking out at you indulgently from beneath slightly pained eyebrows, she was an earth mother who hated being pregnant, a feminist who did battle with every "new feminist" in the intellectual marketplace, a cynic who wrote about food, holidays, chocolate and her husband Matt like a romantic teenager... She was full of contradictions. I never saw enough of her, and now I never will. I loved her, but I could never find a way of explaining it without her going (I can just hear it) "Oh no! Not another bloody protestation of love..." Her memorial service is on Monday.

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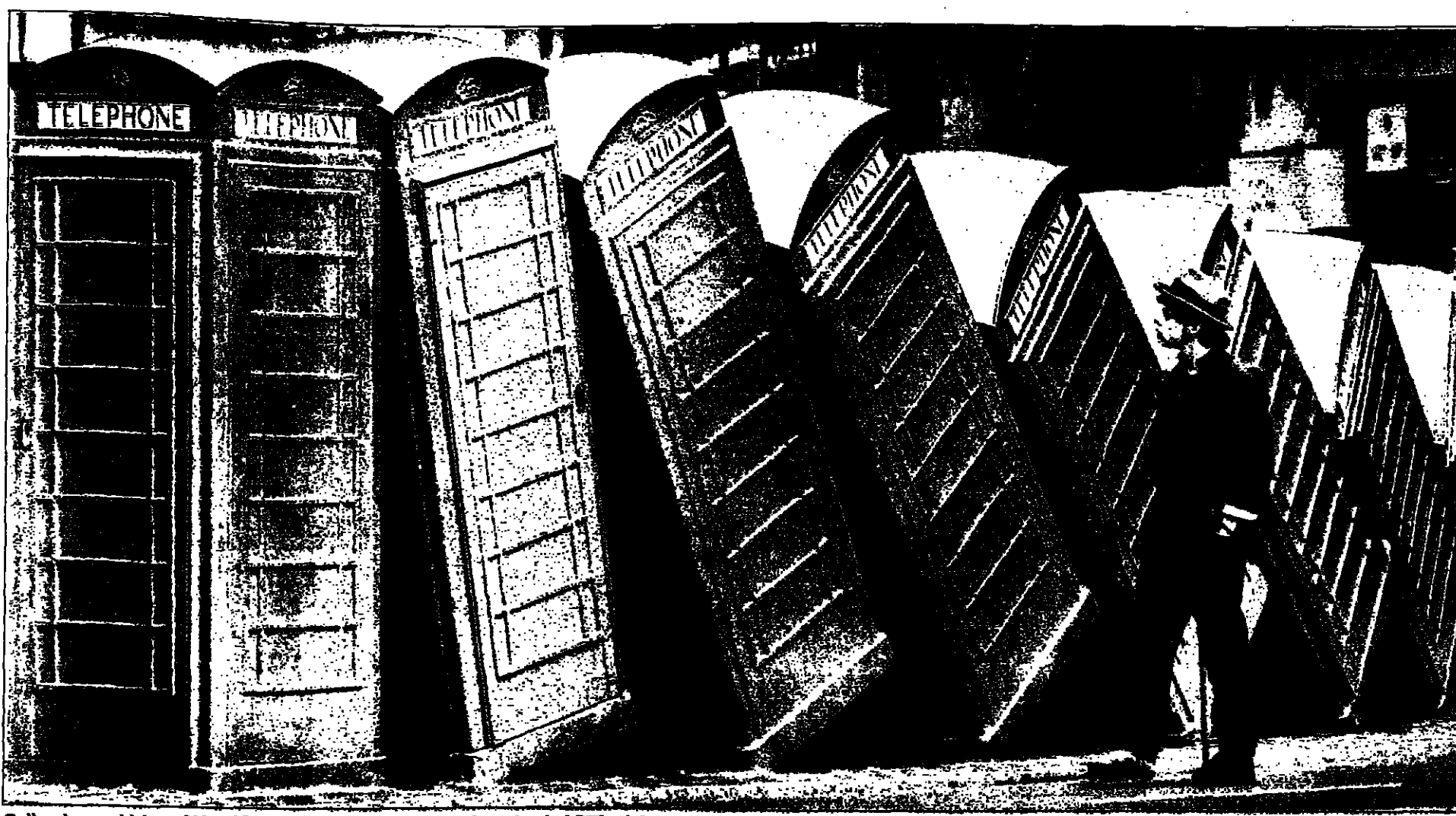
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Collapsing ambitions: WorldCom's \$30bn bid appears to have landed BT's global pretensions back at square one

Photograph: Edward Symes

Rival bid shoots down £13bn BT/MCI deal

British Telecom's planned £22bn (£13.5bn) merger with MCI appeared dead last night, after WorldCom, a fast-growing US operator, launched a rival \$30bn hostile bid. Reporting by Chris Godsmark, Business Correspondent, in London and David Osborne in New York.

In August, BT cut more than 20 per cent off the price of its offer for the 80 per cent of MCI it does not own, after MCI stunned investors with a warning of losses from its move into the local US phone market. Bernard Ebbers, the fast-talking Chief Executive Officer of WorldCom, said in New York that he expected BT to accept the deal. He said he would offer BT a seat on the board of the new company, in which it would have holding of about 10 per cent.

WorldCom's all share offer, which came out of the blue, would create the world's fourth largest telecommunications company. The \$41.50 offer for each MCI share was more than 40 per cent above MCI's closing share price on Tuesday and nearly \$10 a share higher than BT's revised bid price.

BT said in a brief statement last night it had been notified of the bid from WorldCom and was "considering the issues it raises." A spokesman declined to comment further on the developments. MCI in Washington said its board would meet "in due course" to review "all issues and options".

Mr Ebbers said WorldCom's existing local networks would save MCI from the need to invest heavily in expanding its long distance coverage to local customers. The combined group would make savings of \$2.5bn in its first year, for instance by combining staff and networks and cutting corporate overheads. He played down the prospect of large lay-offs at MCI, however. In comparison, BT's deal with MCI would result in savings of only £1.5bn over five years and £500m in year one.

"We can realise far greater synergies than BT can. They don't live here," Mr Ebbers exclaimed. "BT and MCI are both

great companies, but the fit just isn't right between them".

Big shareholders ruled out any move by BT to raise its offer for MCI to match WorldCom's. "When they got in with MCI originally the price was wrong. We were prepared to put up with the renegotiated price, but we'd find it very hard to accept them going higher," said one institution.

Jim McCafferty, a telecommunications analyst with stockbrokers Hoare Govett, added: "BT will have to walk away

from MCI. It has no option. There's no way BT can make a higher offer for the company. Shareholders would just never accept that."

BT shares soared 32.5p yesterday to 442p, as investors welcomed the company's chance to walk away.

In a letter to Bert Roberts, MCI chairman, Mr Ebbers claimed the merged company could avoid paying penalty payments to BT. In the merger terms, BT could receive \$450m if MCI backed out of the deal, but Mr Ebbers said the clause would not be triggered if MCI's shareholders voted against the merger with BT.

In a press conference peppered with jokes, Mr Ebbers said BT would get the board seat. "If they want it, if they act properly". He added further about a future role for BT in the new company: "It is an inconceivable conclusion for me that they (BT) would not want to participate".

He added: "After we have got a deal finished with MCI, we might acquire BT". He even hinted that he recently approached AT&T about a buy-out but that he had not been taken seriously.

The determination of WorldCom to secure MCI was left in no doubt. "These guys are intensely focused on getting this deal done," remarked Tom King, a managing director of Salomon Brothers that is advising on the deal. "Even without the cooperation of BT, we think we can get MCI shareholder approval by the end of the first quarter of next year".

Mr King, whose bank could benefit from a fee that may touch as much as \$100 million, noted that it was the lowering of the BT offer that allowed WorldCom to step in and offer a convincing enough premium of \$10 a share.

While the bid is certain to attract the attention of fair competition regulators in Washington, Mr Ebbers said he was confident that no obstacles would be raised. "Absolutely, the deal is going to go through," he said.

WorldCom, which is already the fourth largest US carrier, also yesterday announced it was spending \$2.4bn to acquire Brooks Fiber, which provides local telecommunications services in 34 US cities. With the infrastructure of Brooks and MCI, WorldCom will have ac-

cess to 70 per cent of the US business market.

Noting that he spoke about his offer to his counterpart at MCI, Mr Roberts, at 9.30 in the morning - several hours after news of the bid hit the news wires - Mr Ebbers joked: "I did tell him that when he is part of WorldCom, he will have to come into the office a little earlier".

The rise of WorldCom - and of its share price - has been nothing short of meteoric. Started by Mr Ebbers and a group of investors in 1983, its revenues have grown from \$1m to \$5.6bn on the back of 40 takeovers and mergers.

It was the \$14bn deal last year to merge with Metropolitan Fiber Systems (MFS), which catapulted WorldCom into the a serious global player. It combined the company's existing long distance customers with a local network in more than 50 US cities.

As Mr Ebbers was keen to point out yesterday, its shares have dramatically outperformed rivals. A \$100 investment in the company in 1989 would have yielded \$3,137 to date, compared to \$190 for BT.

Outlook, page 23

WH Smith chief rejects hostile bid from Waterstone

WH Smith yesterday rejected a highly leveraged bid for the embattled music, books and stationery retailer by Tim Waterstone, its most successful former employee.

Tom Stevenson, Financial Editor, reports.

Richard Handover's first day as chief executive of WH Smith yesterday saw him rejecting a hostile takeover bid from bookseller Tim Waterstone that would have seen the new boss out of the job almost before his feet were under the table.

Smith said the chairman, Jeremy Hardie, had received a bid approach from Mr Waterstone last weekend but had no hesitation in rejecting the offer, which would have given shareholders 200p in cash together with shares in WH Smith New Co, a heavily indebted acquisition vehicle set up for the bid. The rejection was announced after dealings in WH Smith shares closed at 365.5p, down 2.5p.

SBC Warburg Dillon Read acted for Mr Waterstone in raising £1bn of funding to cover the cash element and capital investment in a bid which WH Smith said bore all the hallmarks of the over-ambitious debt-funded takeovers of the 1980s. The deal would have also involved the issue of warrants to the takeover's promoters which would be convertible into up to 5 per cent of Smith's share capital.

The proposed takeover would have seen Mr Waterstone, who left WH Smith in the early 1980s to set up the bookstore chain bearing his name, return to the company for a third spell, this time as chief ex-

ecutive. He returned when WH Smith acquired Waterstones in 1989, leaving in 1993 to pursue other retail projects. The latest of those, a children's emporium called Daisy & Tom, was to have been taken over by Smith as part of his proposals.

Mr Handover said yesterday the WH Smith board had considered the proposals but "firmly believes they are not in the best interests of shareholders". He said he had spoken to WH Smith's leading shareholders this week who had backed his decision to reject the approach.

He added: "The board has had no hesitation in dismissing these proposals which offer no real value to our own shareholders and no premium whilst burdening them with high-risk equity, unnecessary costs and an over-priced acquisition."

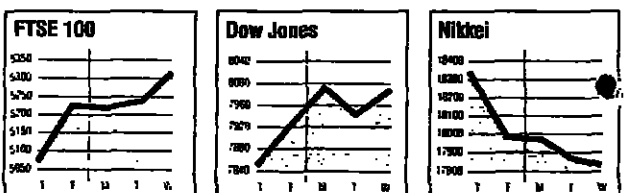
He said that under the proposals, no premium would have been paid to WH Smith's shareholders, who would be given an equity stake in a "highly leveraged" business and be forced to make "an overpriced acquisition of an unproven retail concept for children at an incomprehensible price".

The takeover approach represented Mr Handover's first major challenge in the top job, for which many observers said he was an unspectacular choice. The former head of the wholesale news arm was appointed after a three-month trawl to find a replacement for Bill Cockburn, who left after only 18 months in the job to join BT.

Mr Handover said advisers' fees would have cost shareholders £34m and countered the approach by promising to "improve the profitability of the high street business by focusing on the core product groupings of books, stationery, newspapers and magazines".

Outlook, page 23

STOCK MARKETS



Indices	Close	Change	Change(%)	\$2 wk high	\$2 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	5317.10	72.90	1.39	5244.20	3900.40	3.30
FTSE 250	4838.40	9.50	0.20	4828.90	4348.10	3.37
FTSE 350	2845.80	29.30	1.16	2816.30	1949.20	3.31
FTSE All Share	2482.39	27.37	1.12	2455.02	1925.79	3.30
FTSE SmallCap	2343.5	8.50	0.36	2374.20	2128.40	3.17
FTSE FTSE100	1293.4	6.00	0.47	1346.50	1198.70	3.28
FTSE AIM	1008.8	3.00	0.30	1138.00	1002.10	0.97
Dow Jones	7991.43	46.17	0.58	8269.31	5904.90	1.67
Nikkei	17842.16	-45.55	-0.26	21612.30	17303.65	0.86
Hong Kong	15049.30	184.93	1.24	16873.97	11855.51	2.75
Dax	4196.98	29.13	0.70	4438.95	2655.73	1.90

INTEREST RATES



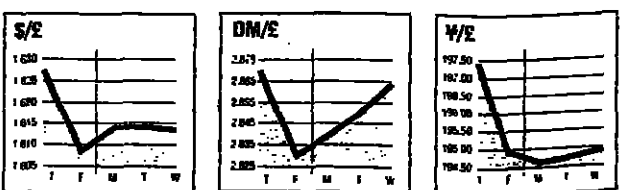
Money Market Rates	3 month	6 month	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year
UK	7.31	1.38	7.58	1.33	6.34	-1.25	6.43	-1.50	
US	5.77	0.14	6.00	0.05	6.01	-0.02	6.30	-0.59	
Japan	0.55	0.04	0.60	-0.11	2.26	-0.83	2.70	-0.75	
Germany	3.40	0.29	3.76	0.48	5.07	-0.58	6.11	-0.79	

Bond Yields	3 month	6 month	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year
UK	1.6141	+0.01c	1.5650		0.8196	0.00c	0.6390		
D-Mark	2.8830	+1.82pf	2.3878		1.7756	+1.32pf	1.5256		
Yen	195.03	+W0.51	174.31		132.84	+W0.31	111.43		
£ Index	100.40	+0.20	87.00		105.10	+0.00	97.50		

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg	Falls	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg
Brit Telecom	442.00	32.50	7.94	Tesco	458.00	-12.50	-2.66
Cell Telecom	506.50	38.00	7.65	Morrison Supp	205.50	-5.00	-2.39
BICC	178.00	12.00	7.23	Greenall Group	370.00	-8.00	-2.17
Cable and Wire	560.50	33.00	6.26	Safeway	355.00	-9.00	-2.56

CURRENCIES



£/Yen	£/DM	£/\$	£/¥	£/¥	£/¥	£/¥	£/¥	£/¥	£/¥
Dollar	1.6141	+0.01c	1.5650		0.8196	0.00c	0.6390		
D-Mark	2.8830	+1.82pf	2.3878		1.7756	+1.32pf	1.5256		
Yen	195.03	+W0.51	174.31		132.84	+W0.31	111.43		
£ Index	100.40	+0.20	87.00		105.10	+0.00	97.50		

OTHER INDICATORS

Commodity	Price	Chg	% Chg	Commodity	Price	Chg	% Chg
Oil (Brent)	19.82	-0.04	-0.20	Gold	336.75	3.30	0.98
Oil (WTI)	19.82	-0.04	-0.20	Gold (1000g)	336.75	3.30	0.98
Oil (Dubai)	19.82	-0.04	-0.20	Gold (1000g)	336.75	3.30	0.98
Oil (Brent)	19.82	-0.04	-0.20	Gold (1000g)	336.75	3.30	0.98

Shell ups profits targets in drive to lead sector

Shell, the Anglo-Dutch oil giant, has moved to accelerate the pace of its internal transformation by raising the profit targets for its main businesses.

According to leading oil analysts the company has launched an ambitious drive to become the industry's top performer, following growing criticism at its failure to spend some of its £8bn cash pile. Senior executives elaborated on the strategy during briefings with analysts in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore last week, in the latest sign of Shell's increasing openness.

The company said it was determined to raise the rate of return on its capital from 12 per

cent to at least 15 per cent in each of its individual operating divisions. Last year Shell struggled to reach the 12 per cent target, compared with BP's returns of around 19 per cent.

Fergus MacLeod, oil analyst with NatWest Securities, said: "Everyone from country chairman to refinery managers proved beyond reasonable doubt that there is a company wide drive to improve returns to at least 15 per cent."

He said the drive could boost Shell's profits by \$1bn a year. "Major cultural change is under way... and almost all expressed confidence that better financial performance will result."

Details of the briefings emerged a day after Shell announced a restructuring of its European petrol business, cutting 3,000 jobs and warning it could leave some markets altogether if profits did not improve. Two big deals in the space of a month, to buy out its joint venture partner in a European chemicals business and to take over a Texas oil pipeline. A Shell spokesman said the company had yet to raise the overall profit target for the whole group, though individual businesses were being set a 15 per cent target.

Chris Godsmark

PowerGen makes plea to be allowed to buy a REC

Ed Wallis, the chairman of PowerGen, today called on the Government to allow it to acquire a regional electricity company, arguing that unless strong, integrated power suppliers emerged the liberalisation of the electricity market next year could be "stillborn".

PowerGen was blocked by the previous government from buying Midlands Electricity on the grounds that it would undermine competition. However, it has never given up on its long-term ambition to add a supply business to its generating activities.

Writing in *The Independent*, Mr Wallis says that if the open-

ing up next spring of the domestic electricity market to competition is to succeed there need to be five or six strong players, much as in petrol, banking and supermarkets.

"The risk of competition being stalled or moribund as 12 incumbent monopolies simply try to defend their own home territory would end," he says.

Scottish Power and the Energy Group - currently the subject of a £3.7bn bid from PacificCorp of the US - already generate, supply and distribute electricity. "Allowing other generators to expand into electricity distribution and supply would break the current impasse...

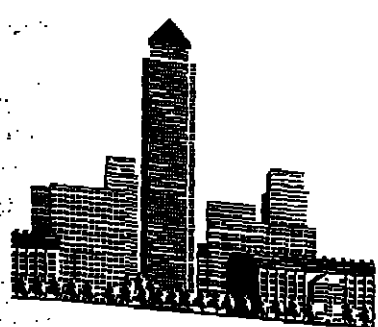
And it will give domestic competition the kick start that it so desperately needs."

John Battle, the Energy Minister, was among a group of MPs who had dinner with Mr Wallis at the Labour Party conference in Brighton this week. Mr Battle is currently developing a new energy policy and has also taken a lead role in trying to ensure that domestic competition starts on time.

Analysis think it unlikely that PowerGen would make a move for a REC before next year.

Michael Harrison
Competition rethink, page 27

كلنا من الأصل



OUTLOOK ON BT, HOUSE PRICE INDICES AND AN OPPORTUNISTIC BID FOR WH SMITH

That's the problem with the City - no vision

Phew! What a relief. By luck rather than design, BT is finally off the MCI hook and the beleaguered US telecoms group will now largely be somebody else's problem. That, at least, will be the reaction of many to WorldCom's out of the blue rival bid for MCI. It is almost inconceivable that BT, having been forced by its own shareholders to negotiate down the price it is bidding for MCI, could now come back with a better offer. To top WorldCom it would have to pay more than first time round.

Unless something unexpected happens, then, BT looks to be definitely out of the running. If you are James Dodd, telecoms analyst at Dresner Kleinwort Benson, or another part of that welfarist City minority which has opposed this deal all along, that is plainly a good thing. BT is now free to embark on an alternative strategy of handing barrowloads of cash back to its shareholders and engaging in the process of small add-on acquisitions in the US and elsewhere. That's going to do a lot more for shareholder value, Mr Dodd argues, than buying a mature, commodity telecoms company in a highly competitive market.

He may be right, but the fact that WorldCom, one of the best performing stocks on Wall Street over the last 10 years, is prepared to pay such a premium for MCI, and along the way hint that it might also be interested in acquiring BT as well, rather suggests that Sir Iain Vallance and his chief executive at BT, Sir Peter Bonfield, have had the strategy right all along. Admittedly, there are overlaps and local

synergies between WorldCom and MCI that make MCI worth more to WorldCom than to BT. Even so, it is plain from what Bernie "joke-a-minute" Ebbers, WorldCom's founder and president, was saying yesterday that he shares some of the same vision and sense of where the telecoms industry will progressively become divided into big global players and small niche domestic operators. By acquiring MCI and making clear his intention to continue with MCI's existing links with BT, Mr Ebbers is putting himself firmly in the first category.

WorldCom is one of those extraordinary business success stories that could only happen in America. Through a combination of inspired entrepreneurialism and aggressive acquisitions, it has grown from nothing 14 years ago, to one of the largest telecoms companies in the US. If it pulls off the MCI deal, it will start to justify its name by becoming the third largest telecoms company in the world by market value, not far behind AT&T and NTT.

Part of the explanation for this is that its stock is by any standards ridiculously highly valued. Wall Street has given Mr Ebbers' ambitions a following wind that Sir Iain can only dream of - the leverage to make big acquisitions at heady prices and give his empire the critical mass it needs to establish itself on the world stage.

BT, a privatised state monopoly, could never have hoped for such support but it might reasonably have expected a less cynical hearing than it got for its MCI transaction. The way in which shareholders

forced BT's hand and a sharp downward revision in the terms last summer looked like a victory for common sense at the time. The tragedy is that by doing so, the City may have condemned BT to a permanent position in the second division of world telecom companies. There is unlikely to be another opportunity quite like MCI.

Making sense of house price claims

It is all very Alice in Wonderland. One big mortgage lender says house prices have risen at a modest annual pace of 5 per cent during the past six months. The other puts the increase at 15 per cent. Which to believe? The Mad Hatter's solution would be to split the difference and call it 10 per cent. As it happens, it is the right conclusion.

For those with short memories, the Nationwide and Halifax also came up with very different figures in 1990 and 1991, when house prices were falling sharply. The Nationwide put the decline at an annual 6 per cent, the Halifax at a less dizzying 1 per cent.

Measuring how much properties are changing hands for seems as though it ought to be straightforward, but it isn't. Any house price index needs to be adjusted for the type of property being sold so that sales of detached houses with all mod cons one month are not compared with sales of damp basement flats another. The index also needs to be adjusted for location

because house prices vary so widely around the country.

The Halifax and Nationwide indices take different approaches to both these technical matters. The former, for instance, weights regional house prices according to the proportion of its lending in each region, whereas the Nationwide uses weights based on regional lending patterns for all mortgage lenders. The Halifax therefore puts more weight than the Nationwide on prices in the north.

At a time when the housing market is roaring away in London and the South-east but only just building up steam in the northern regions, it is therefore no surprise that the measures part company. Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, using weights based on the regional pattern of home ownership, gets a figure bang in the middle.

Both lenders will publish regional breakdowns later this month that will shed more light. But meanwhile there is no reason to conclude that the signals are too mixed to make any sense of them. On the contrary, the picture they paint of the housing market is perfectly clear. Prices in the south-eastern corner are still growing and growing.

Whiff of 1980s in WH Smith bid

You have to admire Tim Waterstone's chutzpah, but his takeover bid for WH Smith belongs in Fiction A-Z rather than Business Books (corporate finance). Still,

not to worry. His flight of fancy warmed the hearts of anyone who remembers with any fondness the swashbuckling, highly leveraged raids of the 1980s.

As it stands, it is hard to see the offer as anything but the latest instalment in the Mills & Boon love/hate story between Waterstone and his former employer. Not to be ignored, though, is the sub-plot - an opportunistic attempt by SBC Warburg to snatch a slice of Smith's recovery for itself through an issue of warrants that would give it 5 per cent of the company.

In essence, shareholders are being asked to swap their 370p shares in Smith for 200p of cash and an uncertain stake in an acquisition vehicle labouring under £1bn of borrowings. This is not a break-up, the bid team promises, but it is hard to see how the sums could be made to add up without some pretty rapid disposals.

WH Smith is undoubtedly up against the ropes, but surely things aren't so bad that it needs to take on a pile of debt, appoint a chief executive with no experience of running a £3bn turnover group and buy a retail concept it doesn't want.

The argument that Tim Waterstone's retail vision will transform tired old WH Smith and shareholder value be miraculously enhanced simply by borrowing some cash and handing 60 per cent of it to shareholders is so much stardust. What is for certain, however, is that the bankers have spotted value and while Tim Waterstone may not get his bookshop back, the tide may be turning for WH Smith's down trodden shareholders.

Austin Reed denies rift at the top as chief departs

Austin Reed, the tailored clothing retailer, yesterday parted company with Chris Thomson, its chief executive, in a surprise move that unsettled the market. Dismissing speculation that he was forced out, the company preferred to talk about growing demand for its clothing and its ambitious expansion plans, writes Sameena Ahmad.

Mr Thomson's abrupt departure from Austin Reed led many observers to speculate that he had been pushed out after presiding over blunders including taking the group into women's casual wear.

However, Colin Evans, Austin's chairman said that Mr Thomson's resignation was "mutually agreed" after management reorganisation last year left him with no real role. Mr Thomson, who has been

with Austin Reed for eight years, seven as finance director, earned £108,000 basic last year plus £25,000 bonus and, on a two-year rolling contract, could receive more than £260,000 in compensation. Shares in Austin Reed slid 5p to 222.5p.

Speaking as the group announced a 9 per cent rise in interim profits to August to £2.5m held back by its depressed manufacturing business, Mr Evans denied there had been a rift with Mr Thomson: "His departure was mutually agreed. Chris is a very dynamic person and needs to be fully stretched. With the new managing directors on board, his responsibilities have been devolved down and there is a bit of a void."

As part of a wide ranging reorganisation, Austin Reed last year appointed two divisional managing directors, Roger Jennings to head up the group's retail division and Colin Houlahan to oversee the more difficult manufacturing business, which makes clothes for other retailers as well as its own shops.

Joan D'Olier, textiles analyst at NatWest Securities called the

resignation "a great surprise". She added: "It is not as if the new board members have just been recruited. But we only have the party line to go on at the moment."

Mr Evans said that trading in womenswear, which had fallen after a disastrous shift from tailored to casual ranges, had bounced back. Against a background of rising consumer demand, like-for-like sales in retail grew 8 per cent at the half year and 6 per cent in the current year despite a lull in sales immediately following the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

In a reversal of strategy, Mr Evans said the group did not now plan to open women's-only clothes stores, but did want to add to the group's 45 shops and single concession over the next three years with acquisitions also "firmly on the agenda".

Mr Evans said that the group planned to reassess its European markets, decreasing the number of customers and developing in new areas such as Spain and Scandinavia. There are no plans to shift manufacturing overseas.



The Corporation of London commissioned a bronze statue of a life trader (above), which was unveiled yesterday, to enhance the appearance of the Walbrook area of the Square Mile. Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

Airtours buys Sun World

Airtours, the UK's second-largest tour operator, yesterday signalled plans for the rapid expansion of its European travel business after announcing the £70m acquisition of Sun World, Belgium's largest tour operator.

Airtours already has a large business in Scandinavia. The planned takeover of Sun World would give Airtours around one-quarter of the market in Belgium, as well as a foothold in France and Holland. Airtours is also eyeing up the German market.

Harry Coc, Airtours deputy chief executive, said yesterday that further European acquisitions were on the cards. Airtours is also keen to grow in North America. However, it will have to compete for acquisition targets with arch-rival Thomson which recently announced intentions to expand across Europe. Thomson is also believed to be keen to capture a large share of the German market.

Airtours is embroiled in 10-month inquiry by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission into the links between travel agents and tour operators. The MMC, which has been investigating alleged anti-competitive practices, is due to pass its report to the Secretary of State in November. However a final decision is not due until early next year.

MMC concerns have focused on vertical links in the industry between tour operators and travel agents and the practice of tying together holiday insurance and discounts. Airtours said yesterday the most like remedies from the MMC were rebranding tour operator-owned travel agents and untangling of insurance and discounts. Mr Coc tried to play down the effects of such a move, claiming it would not be a big deal. However, analysts believe that Thomson and Airtours are likely to be worst hit by such measures.

— Leo Paterso

Rates likely to increase despite mixed signals

Britain's manufacturers had a busy September, calming fears that the strong pound is hammering industry. On the other hand, the Halifax said that house prices barely rose last month despite the consumer boom, contradicting figures from the Nationwide earlier in the week. Diane Coyle, Economics Editor, makes sense of the mixed signals.

The first reports taking the temperature of the economy in September are not those most likely to sway the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee when it meets next week. City experts reckon the Bank will leave the cost of borrowing unchanged for now but will increase interest rates again in November or December when it has official figures on the pace of growth in the third quarter.

However, yesterday's survey of manufacturing did nothing to strengthen the case against a rate rise, while measures of

house prices from rival lenders muddled the waters by drifting further apart for the seventh month running.

According to the Halifax, house prices edged up only 0.2 per cent last month, taking their inflation rate to 6.9 per cent from 6.4 per cent in August. But according to the Nationwide earlier this week, house price inflation is 12.9 per cent and rising, with the average price close to regaining its 1989 peak.

Clairin Barr, an economist at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, said that after taking apart the

two sets of figures, they had concluded that the divergence was due to house prices moving at very different rates in different regions. The Halifax lends more in the North, the Nationwide in the South.

"The truth is almost certainly in the middle," said Mr Barr, adding that house prices were probably rising at a national average of about 10 per cent. In a recent study the investment bank predicted that the pace of increase would pick up around the country. But the Halifax insisted yes-

terday that there were no signs of house prices accelerating, and forecast that the rate would fall back to 6 per cent by the end of the year.

Separately, the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply reported an unexpected pick-up in manufacturing activity in September. There were sharp rises in output and new orders which were most marked in investment rather than consumer goods. The firms surveyed switched from firing to hiring, expanding employment levels.

Sir Bruce said he wanted to bow out on a high note and chose to make the announcement alongside record interim pre-tax profits of £369.4m for the six months to August. The results

Bank of Scotland governor bows out on a high note

Sir Alastair Grant is to be the next governor of the Bank of Scotland, it was announced yesterday, as Sir Bruce Patullo said he would stand down at next May's annual meeting after 18 years at the helm. The appointment of the former Safeway boss had been expected.

Sir Bruce said he wanted to bow out on a high note and chose to make the announcement alongside record interim pre-tax profits of £369.4m for the six months to August. The results

were at the top end of analysts' expectations, but the shares closed 5.5p lower at 506.5p.

Earnings per share rose 20 per cent in the half year to 18p (15p) and the interim dividend increased 19 per cent to 3.40p. The strong result, driven by a reduction in the ratio of costs to income to 51.4 per cent, helped the tier 1 ratio, which measures balance sheet strength, increase from 6.3 per cent to 6.8 per cent.

— Tom Stevenson
Investment column, page 24

'Independent' journalist wins insurers' award

Nic Cicuttini (right), personal finance editor of *The Independent*, has won the title of best journalist writing on life insurance and pensions issues, awarded by the Association of British Insurers, the industry trade body.

The ABI says the awards salute "excellence in the financial services media".



Nic writes regularly in the newspaper's Wednesday and Saturday pages, as well as for the business section of the newspaper.

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EDITED BY SAMEENA AHMAD

Sir Bruce gets the simple things right

Assuming no disasters between now and next June's annual meeting, Sir Bruce Patullo will bow out on a high note after 18 years at the helm of Bank of Scotland. Yesterday's record £369m interim profits were 14 per cent up on last year's first half and beat most expectations.

They confirmed the merits of combining the bank's 300-year-old conservatism with an impressive streak of innovation that meant it entered direct banking years ahead of rivals and pioneered supermarket banking with Sainsbury. Despite having no branch network in England, Bank of Scotland's market share of the UK banking sector has risen in a more or less straight line during Sir Bruce's tenure.

It has achieved that by doing simple things right. While many believe that any

rise in costs is unacceptable, Sir Bruce says no company ever downsized itself to greatness. Key is growing income faster than costs and Bank of Scotland has been doing that for years.

As a result it has some of the most impressive statistics in the sector. The tier 1 ratio of capital to income, the most common measure of a bank's balance sheet strength, rose to a healthy 6.8 per cent from 6.3 per cent. And the important cost/income ratio improved to 51.4 per cent from 52.9 per cent.

Some analysts question Bank of Scotland's strategy, particularly its move into Australia. Shareholders, however, should have no complaints. At the start of 1993, the shares traded at 110p. Yesterday they closed 2p lower at 510p.

Even after such a strong run the price looks justifiable on a forward p/e ratio of 14, although the 1.9 per cent yield leaves little margin of safety. As a relative minimum in a sector of leviathans, a takeover must be odds on. Good value.

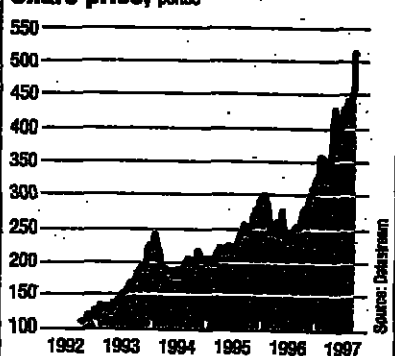
Bank of Scotland: At a glance

Market value: £6.10bn, share price 505.6p

Turnover (£bn)	2.90	2.88	3.40
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Earnings per share (p)	22.3	25.8	31.8
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Share price, pence	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
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Chiroscience still seeking a partner

In these jittery times in the UK biotech sector where share prices plunge on a whiff of bad news, no one wants to disappoint. So Chiroscience was treading carefully yesterday, following the announcement of its interim results. The market has been impatient for it to announce a marketing partner for its lead product, levobupivacaine, a local, long-acting anaesthetic.

With the drug largely through critical final-stage trials and demonstrably safer than alternatives, it will be filed for approval in Europe by the year-end and in the US next April. So where is the high profile tie-up? Though Dr John Padfield, Chiroscience's chief executive, says he is talking to a variety of potential partners, he hinted yesterday that the final deal might be lower key than people expect.

Rather than a marketing alliance, Chiroscience is considering developing levobupivacaine jointly with a pain management specialist who would also be responsible for marketing. Though a deal with a major drug group would give Chi-

rosience a useful royalty stream, it might in the end extract less value. With cures for cancer and HIV the holy grails of research, pain control is low priority for many drug majors. Levobupivacaine, with estimated peak sales of £200m, might be too small for them to bother with.

Meanwhile, Chiroscience needs to think about its funding needs. With cash burn running at some £2m a month, the group's cash pile won't last long. Though its attractive drug pipeline could attract more alliances, the fastest way to boost cash reserves would be demerging or selling its profitable ChiroTech business, which solves chemical problems for the fragrances and flavourings industry. The shares, down 4p to 273.5p are fair value.

Change at the top doesn't stop Druid

Despite changes at the top yesterday, it looks like business as usual for Druid, the high-flying IT consultancy. Floated at 275p last year, the group has yet to disappoint. After another strong set of results,

with full-year profits to June up 66 per cent to £5m, the group's shares closed at 497.5p, 2.5p up. This was despite the loss of MD David Thompson, who is retiring because of ill health. The market was reassured by his replacement, John Peacock, Druid's commercial director who has been with the company for years and should maintain its winning formula.

Druid's business is providing a package of management consultancy and IT solutions to blue-chip clients. Some 90 per cent of its turnover flows from installing SAP, a German software system which computerises and centralises management's financial controls. Worries that demand for SAP will tail off look premature. Besides, Druid is seeking alternatives.

Also encouraging is that Druid has avoided jumping on the millennium time-bomb bandwagon and so looks relatively insulated from the chronic shortage of computer programmers. Rather than employing computer programmers, it prefers to recruit people who have business experience and then train them as IT management consultants. As a result staff turnover is low. A prospective p/e of 29 is hardly a bargain, but not yet too high. Fairly priced.

IN BRIEF

Northern Rock customers rush to sell shares

New shareholders in Northern Rock were engaged in a rush to offload their shares yesterday, despite predictions that takeover bids could sharply increase the value of their windfalls. Lloyds Bank Stockbrokers said nearly a third of its 5,000 calls yesterday morning were requests to sell Northern Rock shares, which finished the day up 11p at 463p.

The rush has been prompted by unexpectedly high prices in an initial auction on Tuesday, when more than 350,000 members sold 190 million shares, yielding windfalls of £2,260 each. Some analysts are predicting that small shareholders may miss out as institutions, convinced that takeovers will push up share prices, snap up the windfalls. But NatWest stockbrokers is urging investors to sell, claiming Northern Rock is vulnerable to interest rate rises.

Minister's role questioned

The position of Nigel Griffiths as competition minister has been questioned by John Redwood, shadow trade and industry secretary. In a letter to Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, Mr Redwood asks why Mrs Beckett's department is refusing to say whether Mr Griffiths is handling the ICI/Dupont competition case. Mr Redwood points out that Mr Griffiths has already been excluded from two travel trade competition inquiries and the merger reference of P&O and Stena. Mr Redwood adds for good measure that the Government's competition policy "is a mess".

One2One is mobile leader

One2One became the fastest growing of the UK's four mobile phone networks in the third quarter of the year, adding 108,000 net new subscribers to its customer base, a figure four times ahead of the same period in 1996. The news, a sign that growth is picking up in the mobile market, was ahead of the 98,000 net new subscribers revealed by Vodafone for the three month period between July and September.

Orange, the newest network, was close behind, expanding its subscriber base by 90,000, to just over a million customers. Cellnet, still the second biggest network, lagged behind its rivals with net growth of 68,000, though the increase was an improvement on the operator's recent performance.

NatWest Australian sale

NatWest Bank has sold County Natwest Australia, its Australian fund management arm which has just under A\$9bn under management, to National Australia Bank for an estimated A\$100m (£45m). It will be renamed County Investment Management and existing senior management will be retained. NAB is Australia's biggest bank but currently has only A\$5bn under management.

Dixons in the clear

Shares in Dixons rose 18p to 663p after an unofficial inquiry by the OFT following complaints cleared the electrical retailer of putting pressure on out-of-town retail parks to exclude competitors from their sites.

Glaxo to close Swiss unit

Glaxo Wellcome intends to close the Geneva Biomedical Research Institute, its research centre in Switzerland which specialises in molecular biology. It will be closed by the end of April next year, with up to 170 redundancies. Research work will be transferred to locations in the UK, US, Italy, France, Spain and Japan. Since the Geneva Institute was acquired in 1987 molecular biology has been integrated into the drug discovery process, Glaxo said yesterday.

Nuclear approaches

British Energy the UK nuclear power generator, has been approached by up to two dozen nuclear power station owners in the three weeks since it set up AmerGen a joint venture with Peco Energy specifically to buy nuclear power stations in the US. They include the two reactors at the Three Mile Island site, put up for sale this week by its owners, General Public Utilities. TMI1 is one of the most efficient generators in the US, but TMI2, the site of a serious nuclear accident in 1979, is unlikely to interest AmerGen.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Amalgamated (Q)	39.9m (28.9m)	2.5m (2.3m)	5.5p (4.3p)	2.5p (2.25p)
Oil Refinery (P)	4.2m (4.8m)	-628,655 (861,571)	-0.65p (1.14p)	0.25p (nil)
Brooks Services (P)	14.5m (13.5m)	307,000 (243,000)	1.85p (1.35p)	1.5p (1.25p)
Bank of Scotland (Q)	- (-)	385.4m (244.3m)	18p (15p)	5.40p (2.81p)
Chiroscience (Q)	9.2m (4.7m)	-14.4m (7.6m)	-13.6p (8.7p)	nil
Decca Group (P)	59m (52m)	3.58m (228,000)	24p (10.7p)	24p
Johnstone Group (P)	78.5m (71m)	1.18m (1.65m)	3.35p (7.5p)	4.5p (4.5p)
Freemantle Group (P)	52.5m (45.8m)	1.57m (1.21m)	9.5p (7.1p)	3p (nil)
Avon Group (P)	17.1m (16.3m)	-1.9m (-3.7m)	-5.26p (-4.72p)	nil
Style (Q)	137m (88.5m)	-2.49m (571,000)	-4.77p (1.26p)	nil

(P) - Final (Q) - Interim

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25/SHARES

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BT leads the way as Footsie continues its spectacular advance

MARKET REPORT

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In just four trading days Footsie has soared 251.6 points, probably the most spectacular advance ever witnessed.

Yesterday, with BT leading the charge, the index rose 72.9 to 5,317.1, yet another peak. Trading was heavy with Seagull turnover nearly hitting 1.2 billion shares. BT and Northern Rock were responsible for around one-third of the action. Supporting indices made modest headway but it was very much a blue-chip party with, it seemed, more fund managers reluctantly stirring from the sidelines.

The latest upsurge occurred after Gartmore, the National Westminster Bank subsidiary with £47bn under management, disclosed it too was piling up cash, raising its liquidity to 17 per cent. It now rivals PDM as the stock market's biggest bear.

There is no doubt the mad-cap autumnal stampede has caught many professionals on the hop. One described yesterday's display as 'manic' and many likened the WorldCom counter-bid for MCI to the excesses of the last bull market when Satechi & Satechi attempted to win Midland Bank and little engineer Benlox audaciously bid for Storehouse.

Still there is a strong view that even at its seemingly heady level the market is still not overvalued and there is room for further headway.

The emergence of the new bid for MCI had BT shares buzzing, largely on hopes it will be forced to return more cash to shareholders via another special dividend.

At one time up 46p they closed 32.5p higher at 442p. Seagull put turnover at a remarkable 159.4 million, indi-

cating arbitrageurs were still playing heavily.

If BT is tempted to walk away from MCI the market believes it would reward its efforts to take over Cable & Wireless. Its earlier attempts failed but did claim C&W to more than 600p. The shares jumped 33p to 560.5p on the prospect of renewed attention.

Others to enjoy the BT buzz included Orange, up 9p to 230.5p, and Vodafone, claiming more than 4.6 million customers, 13.5p at 346p.

Cold Telecom, offering cut-price services, was another enjoying a busy line, drawing additional support from regulatory moves to increase competition. The shares rose 36p to 506.5p. They were sold at 275p in December.

Besides the telecom excitement the market drew strength from a rampant per-

formance by Government stocks, higher by up to £1.25, and a strong New York display with the Dow Jones Average topping 8,000 points.

Shell had another active session with NatWest Securities drawing attention to its lack of sparkle compared with British Petroleum, the shares flared 23p to 476.5p.

Northern Rock could not

have chosen a better day for its debut. In heavy trading it ended at 463p against a 451.9p auction price.

Other financials were hitting the high spots with Barclays up 47p to 1,721.5p and National Westminster Bank, selling its Australian fund management side, 16p to 952.5p. Leading retailers, such as Kingfisher and Marks & Spencer, were in the money on hopes they will benefit from the Northern Rock windfall.

Supermarkets, however, were in retreat and after its recent run Storehouse succumbed to profit taking.

Cookson, the industrial materials group, was firm at 252p after a dinner hosted by Henderson Crosthwaite, Dairy Crest, meeting analysts, held at 275p.

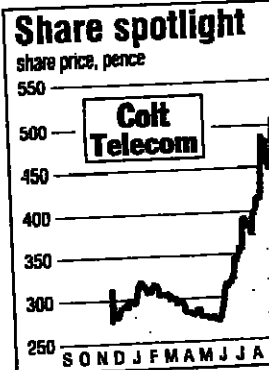
Viglen, the Amstrad spin-off, jumped 16p to 79p on its

Microsoft agreement and Trace Computers firmed to 715.5p as MMT Computers threateningly lifted its stake to just over 10 per cent. Circuit board maker Prestwick hardened 2p to 33p after aggressive mini-conglomerate TT moved to 8.43p per cent.

International Enxet gained 2p to 38p following encouraging tests on its zinc project in Kazakhstan.

Johnston, a builder, fell 22.5p to 302.5p after a profits downturn. London & Edinburgh Publishing managed a 0.5p gain to 5.5p; it reported an interim loss.

Graystone, an engineer, held at 40.5p. Melton Medes, the vehicle of entrepreneur Nathu Puri, has acquired 500,000 shares and now has 4.95 per cent. Standard Rock, after Tuesday's collapse, was up 25p at 175p.

Share spotlight
Colt Telecom

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is the latest twelve months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including extraordinary items. Other details: R: Rights; S: Special; P: Partly Paid; N: Nil Paid; A: Aps. G: Prices are Bloomberg Generic.

Source: Bloomberg

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Seagull volume: 14 trades n/a

Market Leaders: Top 20 volumes

at 5:00pm

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

1000 5256.0 Up 11.8 1300 5292.3 Up 38.7

1400 5267.4 Up 32.2 1800 5285.0 Up 40.8

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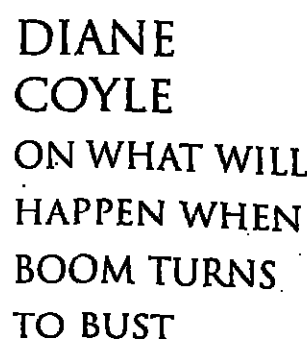
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PEOPLE & BUSINESS

JOHN
WILLCOCK

How, for example, will a Government committed to full employment, however that is defined, react to the redundancy programmes that the next downturn will bring? Evidence in a book published to-day on how companies cope with a recession offers some tantalising hints

More interesting is the way firms react to recession. Uniformly, they try to cut

But would using the tax system to reshape the way companies cut costs during a recession be enough to meet the pledge to keep the economy close to full employment? Probably not. One issue is what full employment means.

* "Coping With Recession", Paul Geroski and Paul Gregg, Cambridge University Press £40 or £14.95.

aside by someone who knows a thing or two about stepping out of the limelight. George Bush told Sir Bruce the worst thing about not being President of the United States any more was getting

Burmah Castrol's **Tim Stevenson** is to succeed **Jonathan Fry** as chief executive of the independent lubricants and chemicals group. **Mike Dearden**, currently chief executive of Burmah Castrol's chemicals group, will take over from Mr Stevenson as chief executive of the lubricants division. In a shake-up following Mr Fry's succession to the chairmanship, **Jamie Pike** will succeed Mr Dearden and join the board of Burmah from February next year.

Oct57	380.00	Nov57	337.00	Nov57	86.15	Oct57	258.00	Nov57	257.75
Nov57	316.00	Nov57	1475.00	Nov58	58.00	Mar58	267.00	Jan58	
Mar58	300.50	Jan58	1490.00	Mar58	90.00	May58	272.00	Mar58	
Nov58	1357	Nov58	186	Nov58	732	Oct58	0	Nov58	

Other Softs

Dec	Lyne Cotton	(CME) \$/40K lb	63.75	Dec	White Maize	(SAP) \$/100 mt	86.00
Dec	Pork Cuts	(CME) \$/40K lb	63.75	Oct	Wheat	(CME) \$/50 lb	96.00
Nov	Orange Juice	(CITN) \$/5K lb	72.10	Dec	Cotton	(CITN) \$/50K lb	96.00
Oct	Milk	(CSC) \$/50K lb	16	Oct	Cocoa Palm	(CCLT) \$/20K lb	16.00
Dec	Octs	(CBOT) \$/5K bush	35.50	Oct	Soya Oil	(CBO) \$/50K lb	16.00

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79720	84810	3.74	NAM Sm Cos & Rec Inc	245.80
79150	75200	2.97	Pacific Basin	228.20

2065.00	2697.00	2.92	Pacific Basin Acc	241
87.23	92.80	0.00	Premier Exempt	204
67.53	93.12	0.00	Safety First	113.6
78.99	84.04	1.09	3mCrss&Rnc	557.5
			Cost/Unit & Base Amt	776.7

هكذا من الأصل

ملف من الأصل

Pearson pays \$513m for 'Baywatch' group

Mrs Scardino said the deal had been funded in part by the sale of "passive" television interests. Pearson has raised £134m this year from the sale of minority stakes in TVB, the Hong Kong broadcaster, and in Flextech. Other shareholdings, such as the stake in BSKyB, are being "looked at closely".

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COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Goal guru kicks off for Woodward

If England's goalkickers manage to put the boot into Australia in a little over six weeks' time, the Wallabies will know who to blame.

The much-maligned Dave Alred was back on national duty yesterday and as Chris Hewett reports, his appearance marked a small but significant triumph for the new coaching panel.

Clive Woodward's honeymoon period may not prove quite as long-lasting as Tony Blair's - New Labour have only William Hague to worry about while England's recently appointed coach is about to undergo a four-week trial by All Black, Springbok and Wallaby - but just at the moment, he is getting his own way on all the important issues. The specialist presence of Dave Alred, philosopher king to the world's finest goalkickers, at Bisham Abbey yesterday signalled Woodward's first victory over the blazered denizens of Twickenham.

Not that the new boy would dream of putting it in such stark terms, of course, for diplomacy is all in these early days of his stewardship. But he has undeniably succeeded where Jack Rowell, his predecessor, consistently failed by convincing the Rugby Football Union of Alred's importance to the England cause. "I am absolutely of

the opinion that we need a full-time kicking coach and at the moment, Dave is the best in the business," said Woodward, who consulted the kickers in his squad before making his pitch to the powers that be.

That Alred is also the most expensive in the business has long lodged in the RFU's collective craw. The Bristol-based former American football kicker was once blacklisted by the then amateur union authorities for having the brass neck to accept money from the Minnesota Vikings and last season he managed the remarkable feat of being deemed "too professional" for the newly professionalised game. In short, senior figures in the national set-up still suspect his motives, considering him a mercenary, a hired hand whose instincts are to serve the highest bidder rather than nail his colours to the red rose mast.

Certainly, Alred has worked extensively with kickers from rival nations - the Wallabies themselves have used his expertise for some years - yet he insists that, given the right terms, he would happily devote himself to England. "Of course I want to be involved," he said yesterday. "This is a start. I'm here on a session-by-session basis at the moment but I'm hopeful of things sorting themselves out over the long term."

If they do, Woodward will have his dream team in place: John Mitchell as assistant coach; Richard Hill and Rob Smith on board with the A team; Phil Keith-Roach as the scrummaging



Hands-on role: Clive Woodward (second right), the new England coach, pursues Phil Greening, flanked by Austin Healey, on the training ground yesterday. Photograph: Peter Jay

guru; Jim Blair as the fitness taskmaster; and Alred on the ball with the marksmen.

Perhaps the most influential member of Woodward's think-tank will not be on the payroll, however. Ed Morrison, the international referee who controlled the 1995 World Cup final, attended yesterday's session in an advisory capacity and will continue to do so during the build-up to this autumn's forthcoming quarter of Tests with the southern superpowers.

"The professional coach leaves nothing to chance," said

Woodward, concerned if not alarmed at the lingering confusion surrounding the ruck and tackle laws and acutely conscious of the many conflicts of interpretation that exist between European referees and their brethren from south of the equator. "International matches can be won and lost on small technicalities and Ed's knowledge will help us straighten a few things out. I also hope to speak to each of the Test referees before their respective matches to find out how they want things done."

Roughly a quarter of Woodward's 23-man "elite" squad were unable to train yesterday - John Bentley, Jeremy Guscott, Matt Dawson, Kyran Bracken, Simon Shaw and Tim Rodber were the men in possession of sick notes - but the coach was adamant that all would be available for selection when the Wallabies hit town for the opening international of the season on 15 November. "John, Jerry and Kyran have yet to play this season but they are close to match fitness," he said. "They wouldn't be in this party if we

didn't think they had a chance of making the Australia game."

"I know we have only a couple of these Wednesday sessions left to us, but by the time we face the Wallabies we'll have had ample time to get the team in shape. To be honest, I can't wait to stop all this theorising and play a match. Once we've had 80 minutes against Australia, I'll have a much better idea of where we stand. They have a new coach, as do the Springboks, and it will be fascinating to see how us newcomers approach the job in hand."

Saracens recall for Pienaar

Saracens have made nine changes, including the recall of the former Springbok captain Francois Pienaar, for their European Conference match at Neath on Saturday. Pienaar, the player-coach, was among those missing when Saracens lost their 100 per cent tournament record at Castres.

Lance Sherrell, Treviso's South African-born stand-off, is out of the key Heineken Cup Pool E match against Llanelli.

Sherrell, the Italian champions' top scorer in this season's tournament with 31 points, suffered rib damage in last weekend's 52-6 victory over Caledonia.

The former Australia coach Greg Smith says his preferred next move would be a club position in England.

"I think England would be the place for me because, with any of the European clubs, communication might be too difficult," Smith said.



Who is the greatest footballer of all time? Now you can help us choose. Because England, the home of the world's greatest sport, is about to become the permanent venue for the International Football Hall of Fame, backed by the Independent and the Professional Footballers' Association. And we need you to decide which of the game's heroes should be first to be inducted.

Over the next few weeks with your help, we will pick the best 25 of all time to be inducted in November in the official Hall of Fame. To qualify, your pick must have played for his country and have retired for three years.

So get voting now. What we need you to do is nominate up to four players for election to the Hall of Fame. Simply follow the instructions on the right.

Internet: You can also cast your vote on the Internet at www.sporting-life.com. This is how it all works.

● A player of any nationality can be elected. He must have been retired for three years and have gained a full cap. Anyone can make up to four nominations.

● A nomination must be sent to the International Football Hall of Fame on an Official Voting Form, by telephone to a registered number, or via the Internet.

● Voting ends on Sunday November 9, 1997. The five players with most nominations will automatically be elected.

● A Selection Committee made up of seven retired players from different countries, with a chairman from the PFA, will draw up a short list of 60 players from those who receive most votes. This list is given to a panel of football journalists, chaired by the Mirror's Harry Harris. Each will choose a top 20. The 20 players who receive most votes will be elected.

Pick your greatest team ever - see the Independent on Sunday and Monday's Independent for details.

YOUR VOTE COUNTS make sure you use it!

Hall of Famers

MY VOTES

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2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

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Who is the greatest?

When selecting your players for the International Hall of Fame, you have the chance to make FOUR votes and four votes ONLY. Remember your votes count, as the top five players overall from all the votes received will automatically go into The Hall of Fame.

In the table below, we have listed 250 players who could all be in contention. To make your selection, all you have to do is select your choice of up

to four players. If you wish you may select only one, but FOUR is the maximum. Select up to four players, noting down their code numbers and then call 0930 565 996. First of all, you will be asked to carry out a quick test to determine what type of phone you have. You will then be directed to enter your chosen player codes. At the end of the call, you will be asked to leave your name and address. Your votes will be

registered against your name. VOTE NOW on: 0930 565 996

If the player or players you wish to vote for are not listed below, you can vote for them by using the form below and sending it to: The Independent, Hall of Fame, PO Box 6927, London E3 3NZ. Postal entries must be received by November 8.

Please note, you should use the form only if your selections are not listed in

the table below. If you experience problems voting, call our helpline: 0990 800 283. You cannot register your vote on this line. Vote lines close on November 9, 1997. Republic of Ireland number is 1550 123 302 (Tone phones only).

Calls should last no more than two mins. 50p per minute at all times. Calls from Republic of Ireland cost 58p per minute include VAT.

The players

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM
300	GOALKEEPERS	
301	Gordon Banks	England
302	Joel Sassi	France
303	Amelino Cabral	Mexico
304	Ray Clemence	England
305	David Casper	USA
306	Felix	Brazil
307	Henry	France
308	Pat Jennings	Wales
309	Jack Kelsey	Wales
310	Sergio	Germany
311	Jean-Marie Pfaff	Belgium
312	Frank Rost	Germany
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401	David O'Leary	Ireland
402	Walter Schuster	Scotland
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هكذا من الأصل

Arkadian can claim the Middle ground

Today's big race at Newmarket, the Middle Park Stakes, is a six-year-old colts, which has a reputation for acting as an indicator to the following year's 2,000 Guineas and Derby, writes Sue Montgomery.

Where William Blenkiron led others now follow. The fuss made about sponsorship in racing over the past couple of decades might give the impression that commercially driven provision of prize-money was a modern phenomenon. But not so. The Middle Park Stakes, to be contested this afternoon at Newmarket for the 122nd time, was instigated by the aforementioned Blenkiron, a forward-thinking breeder who gave the then huge sum of £1,000 towards the first three runnings of the six-furlong race in order to publicise the wares from his Middle Park Stud.

Blenkiron, a Yorkshireman, had a flourishing haberdashery business in London and his astuteness was not limited to buttons and bows. His race swiftly became the most important two-year-old test of the year, with his winner generally made winter favourite for the Classics.

But the eventual development of numerous other valuable end-of-season targets for juvenile colts has meant such aspirations have, like Middle Park Stud itself (it now lies underneath the south-east London suburb of Eltham), disappeared.

The last Middle Park Stakes winner to go on to Epsom glory was Bahram in 1933. And in post-war years only six 2,000 Guineas winners have emerged from the role of honour, with de-

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Fifi
(Newmarket 1.30)
NB: Ivory's Joy
(Newmarket 2.05)

creasing frequency: Nearula (1952), Our Babu (1954), Right Tack (1968), Brigadier Gerard (1970), Known Fact (1979) and Rodrigo de Triana (1991). And it is 15 years since a Middle park

winner - Dicks - topped the two-year-old colts' classifications. But if such a historic contest is no longer the prime target for the best potential milers or middle-distance horses, it can pinpoint high-class young sprinters, like Royal Applause, winner two years ago.

This afternoon's contest, though, does not seem, on paper at least, to be a vintage renewal. If, as seems likely, the Gimcrack Stakes winner Carrowkeel defeats this morning because of the fast ground, the only previous pattern winner in the field will be Arkadian Hero, who scraped home in

the Group 2 Mill Reef Stakes at Newbury 12 days ago.

Arkadian Hero (3.10) was backed as if defeat was out of the question then but gave punters a fright as he became bogged down in the tacky ground. Today's going will suit his fluent action far better and the free-running son of Tremolino and Frankie Dettori should be capable of ensuring another Group 1 trophy ends up on Michael Tabor's sideboard. Luca Cumani's string are in rude health at present, which is more than can be said for his trainer, who was confined to bed with a virus yesterday.

If there is to be a surprise it may come from Captain Tim, stablemate of Tuesday's Cheveley Park winner Embassy and named for his owner, Wafic Said's racing manager, Tim Bulwer-Long. This Fairy King colt, with only a second place in a maiden under his belt, is being thrown in at the deep end, but he has reportedly progressed nicely since following home Determent - a winner yesterday - at Nottingham two weeks ago.

Another of Said's playfully-named colts, Frankie Ferrari (after guess who), is expected to step up on his debut in the seven-furlong maiden, which also marks the first appearance of Regal Patriarch, young half-brother to St Leger hero, but unlikely to be runner, Silver Patriarch. But Wandering Wolf (4.15), the mount of Olivier Peslier, may be worth a chance at the third time of asking.

In view of the original sponsorship of the Middle Park Stakes, Europe's premier equine auction house, Tattersalls, may be slightly peeved that none of the participants in today's running is a graduate of its flagship yearling dispersal, the Houghton Sale, which finishes this evening.

The Thoroughbred Corporation, the high-rolling American-based group of owners who currently back the Middle Park, laid out another 260,000 guineas yesterday afternoon for a son of Zafonic, but that may be small beer against some of the prodigality expected in the Tattersalls arena tonight, when among the blue-blooded glossy darlings to be offered are a brother to Entrepreneur and a half-sister to Pilsudski.



Cumani Trains Middle Park favourite, Arkadian Hero

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RUGBY LEAGUE

Britain lose three for Test series

Great Britain suffered a major blow yesterday when three of their leading players were ruled out of the Test series against Australia.

The Australian Rugby League has turned down a request to release Jason Robinson and Gary Connolly from their contracts in order to play for their country in the series next month. An ARL spokesman said: "It was felt inappropriate to allow the ARL contracted players to play against a team which refuses the claims of the ARL or its contracted players in Australia."

To make matters worse, their Wigan team-mate, Tony Smith, has not only been ruled out of his club's World Cup Championship tie against Hunter Mariners tomorrow - a game Connolly will also miss - but also out of the Tests. He needs an operation on a knee injury.

As Shaun Edwards' move to Bradford was confirmed, London Broncos were putting their faith in a raw recruit as his replacement at scrum-half against Cronulla on Sunday. Giles Thomas, a 20-year-old from Worcester who was discovered playing rugby union seven years from Bromsgrove, will make his full debut in the WCC quarter-final.

"I've a lot of faith in him," the London coach, Tony Currie, said. "He has played consistently well in the reserve team. He's a tremendously tough kid." Thomas' job is made slightly less daunting by the absence of the Australian Test scrum-half, Paul Green, with a cracked sternum.

Edwards' predicted move to Bradford went through yesterday, with the Bulls paying London around £40,000 after the player agreed a two-year contract. "I wanted to come back north and, when the champions come in for you, you take it as a compliment," he said. He is having a knee operation today but is confident of passing the medical that will finalise the deal. Like Smith, though, he is out of the Tests.

Clubs last night voted to accept the key proposals of the League's technical director, Joe Lydon, including reducing overseas quotas and imposing a limit of 25 full-time professionals.

- Dave Hadfield

CRICKET

Top job for Cumbe

Lancashire yesterday named Jim Cumbe as their new chief executive, taking over from John Bower, who left Old Trafford suddenly six weeks ago.

Cumbe, who had two spells with Lancashire as a player, also played football, and after helping Worcestershire to win the 1974 championship was Aston Villa's goalkeeper in their 1975 League Cup win. He went on to become commercial manager with Warwickshire and Lancashire's first marketing manager in 1987. In the last decade he helped to increase turnover to £5.5m.

The former England off-spinner John Embury has retired from all senior cricket. Embury, 45, withdrew from the first-class game in June, but still appeared for Northamptonshire in limited-over matches. He will now concentrate on coaching at Wantage Road.

Embury will assist coach on England's tour to the West Indies this winter. Sussex have made their former batsman Neil Lenham their new marketing manager.

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HYPERION'S
TV TIPS

NEWMARKET

2.05: Blis was on 50-1 the time before last but proved that was no fluke by winning again two weeks ago. It would be dangerous to ignore her claims again, particularly as she has

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

a handy draw against the far falls. The one to beat here, though, is the admirably tough IVORY'S TOWER. This filly won last at Newbury last time out, despite losing ground when hampered at the start. Nuclear

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

heads the morning briefing last but, recently, the Ramsden stable has not been in good form.

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

2.35: BIN ROSIE is hard to oppose in this event. She is a reliable mare who held Fatefully by four lengths

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

at Newbury earlier this month. That victory confirmed her well-being and she should have too much pace for the three-year-olds Intikab and Swiss Law.

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

3.10: ARKADIAN HERO is certain to start a short-priced favourite but looks home and dry. Last time out, at Newbury, this colt did not impress as much as his previous victory. The sticky going at the Berkshire course was responsible for

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

Brighon in which Follereau managed only eight. Follereau had won from a good draw at Ryeon previously and now needs to be on his best to make a major task conceding at Ryeon after his half-length Epsom win from High Carry (same time). Ivory's Joy has twice won at Ryeon - the latest in a nursery at Newbury with Eastern Ruby (200 yards) - but has not been in the field since. Ivory's Joy would not seem good enough, a remark which also applies to Sole Spirit despite having shown some ability in maidens.

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

Selection: NUCLEAR DEBATE

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

that, and today's faster surface should see him back to his best.

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

3.40: Topsy Creek is difficult to weigh up in this sprint. He was comfortably held by DASHING BLUE at Newbury two weeks ago but that was the Ben Hanbury runner's related reappearance and the three-year-old could be a potent threat to the favourite. Having said that, Frankie Dettori has to get his heart at present and is a worthy favourite.

HYPERION

NEWMARKET

FORM GUIDE
DASHING BLUE, the Portland winner under 50-1, looks good meeting Hello Master (with on the unfavourable far side) on 30-1 better terms. He never quite got to all-the-way winner Evergreen at Newbury a fortnight ago, but it did show he has the ability to improve with the very smart Hello Master behind him in that. Hello Master won the last Blue trial, but this will not be easy under the 50-1 Group penalty and meeting Dashing Blue 40-1, already in the field at Newbury and has now left John Gosden, but Topsy Creek could be faded with his seventh place (three lengths behind Dashing Blue) on his first run since his injury and now with the best draw. Blue is trotted up in a smaller race at Leicester last time and is preferred to Botsch and Botsch, who was not good enough in his grade at Doncaster.

NEWMARKET - 3.40

Place	C	H	L	T
1st	1	2	3	4
2nd	5	6	7	8
3rd	9	10	11	12
4th	13	14	15	16
5th	17	18	19	20
6th	21	22	23	24
7th	25	26	27	28
8th	29	30	31	32
9th	33	34	35	36
10th	37	38	39	40
11th	41	42	43	44
12th	45	46	47	48
13th	49	50	51	52
14th	53	54	55	56
15th	57	58	59	60
16th	61	62	63	64
17th	65	66	67	68
18th	69	70	71	72
19th	73	74	75	76
20th	77	78	79	80
21st	81	82	83	84
22nd	85	86	87	88
23rd	89	90	91	92
24th	93	94	95	96
25th	97	98	99	100

RESULTS

BRIGHTON

2.20: 1. PRIVATE SEAL (4) (G) (L) (M) (N) (O) (P) (Q) (R) (S) (T) (U) (V) (W) (X) (Y) (Z) (AA) (AB) (AC) (AD) (AE) (AF) (AG) (AH) (AI) (AJ) (AK) (AL) (AM) (AN) (AO) (AP) (AQ) (AR) (AS) (AT) (AU) (AV) (AW) (AX) (AY) (AZ) (BA) (BB) (BC) (BD) (BE) (BF) (BG) (BH) (BI) (BJ) (BK) (BL) (BM) (BN) (BO) (BP) (BQ) (BR) (BS) (BT) (BU) (BV) (BW) (BX) (BY) (BZ) (CA) (CB) (CC) (CD) (CE) (CF) (CG) (CH) (CI) (CJ) (CK) (CL) (CM) (CN) (CO) (CP) (CQ) (CR) (CS) (CT) (CU) (CV) (CW) (CX) (CY) (CZ) (DA) (DB) (DC) (DD) (DE) (DF) (DG) (DH) (DI) (DJ) (DK) (DL) (DM) (DN) (DO) (DP) (DQ) (DR) (DS) (DT) (DU) (DV) (DW) (DX) (DY) (DZ) (EA) (EB) (EC) (ED) (EE) (EF) (EG) (EH) (EI) (EJ) (EK) (EL) (EM) (EN) (EO) (EP) (EQ) (ER) (ES) (ET) (EU) (EV) (EW) (EX) (EY) (EZ) (FA) (FB) (FC) (FD) (FE) (FF) (FG) (FH) (FI) (FJ) (FK) (FL) (FM) (FN) (FO) (FP) (FQ) (FR) (FS) (FT) (FU) (FV) (FW) (FX) (FY) (FZ) (GA) (GB) (GC) (GD) (GE) (GF) (GG) (GH) (GI) (GJ) (GK) (GL) (GM) (GN) (GO) (GP) (GQ) (GR) (GS) (GT) (GU) (GV) (GW) (GX) (GY) (GZ) (HA) (HB) (HC) (HD) (HE) (HF) (HG) (HH) (HI) (HJ) (HK) (HL) (HM) (HN) (HO) (HP) (HQ) (HR) (HS) (HT) (HU) (HV) (HW) (HX) (HY) (HZ) (IA) (IB) (IC) (ID) (IE) (IF) (IG) (IH) (II) (IJ) (IK) (IL) (IM) (IN) (IO) (IP) (IQ) (IR) (IS) (IT) (IU) (IV) (IW) (IX) (IY) (IZ) (JA) (JB) (JC) (JD) (JE) (JF) (JG) (JH) (JI) (JJ) (JK) (JL) (JM) (JN) (JO) (JP) (JQ) (JR) (JS) (JT) (JU) (JV) (JW) (JX) (JY) (JZ) (KA) (KB) (KC) (KD) (KE) (KF) (KG) (KH) (KI) (KJ) (KL) (KM) (KN) (KO) (KP) (KQ) (KR) (KS) (KT) (KU) (KV) (KW) (KX) (KY) (KZ) (LA) (LB) (LC) (LD) (LE) (LF) (LG) (LH) (LI) (LJ) (LK) (LM) (LN) (LO) (LP) (LQ) (LR) (LS) (LT) (LU) (LV) (LW) (LX) (LY) (LZ) (MA) (MB) (MC) (MD) (ME) (MF) (MG) (MH) (MI) (MJ) (MK) (ML) (MN) (MO) (MP) (MQ) (MR) (MS) (MT) (MU) (MV) (MW) (MX) (MY) (MZ) (NA) (NB) (NC) (ND) (NE) (NF) (NG) (NH) (NI) (NJ) (NK) (NL) (NM) (NO) (NP) (NQ) (NR) (NS) (NT) (NU) (NV) (NW) (NX) (NY) (NZ) (OA) (OB) (OC) (OD) (OE) (OF) (OG) (OH) (OI) (OJ) (OK) (OL) (OM) (ON) (OO) (OP) (OQ) (OR) (OS) (OT) (OU) (OV) (OW) (OX) (OY) (OZ) (PA) (PB) (PC) (PD) (PE) (PF) (PG) (PH) (PI) (PJ) (PK) (PL) (PM) (PN) (PO) (PP) (PQ) (PR) (PS) (PT) (PU) (PV) (PW) (PX) (PY) (PZ) (QA) (QB) (QC) (QD) (QE) (QF) (QG) (QH) (QI) (QJ) (QK) (QL) (QM) (QN) (QO) (QP) (QQ) (QR) (QS) (QT) (QU) (QV) (QW) (QX) (QY) (QZ) (RA) (RB) (RC) (RD) (RE) (RF) (RG) (RH) (RI) (RJ) (RK) (RL) (RM) (RN) (RO) (RP) (RQ) (RR) (RS) (RT) (RU) (RV) (RW) (RX) (RY) (RZ) (SA) (SB) (SC) (SD) (SE) (SF) (SG) (SH) (SI) (SJ) (SK) (SL) (SM) (SN) (SO) (SP) (SQ) (SR) (SS) (ST) (SU) (SV) (SW) (SX) (SY) (SZ) (TA) (TB) (TC) (TD) (TE) (TF) (TG) (TH) (TI) (TJ) (TK) (TL) (TM) (TN) (TO) (TP) (TQ) (TR) (TS) (TT) (TU) (TV) (TW) (TX) (TY) (TZ) (UA) (UB) (UC) (UD) (UE) (UF) (UG) (UH) (UI) (UJ) (UK) (UL) (UM) (UN) (UO) (UP) (UQ) (UR) (US) (UT) (UU) (UV) (UW) (UX) (UY) (UZ) (VA) (VB) (VC) (VD) (VE) (VF) (VG) (VH) (VI) (VJ) (VK) (VL) (VM) (VN) (VO) (VP) (VQ) (VR) (VS) (VT) (VU) (VV) (VW) (VX) (VY) (VZ) (WA) (WB) (WC) (WD) (WE) (WF) (WG) (WH) (WI) (WJ) (WK) (WL) (WM) (WN) (WO) (WP) (WQ) (WR) (WS) (WT) (WU) (WV) (WW) (WX) (WY) (WZ) (XA) (XB) (XC) (XD) (XE) (XF) (XG) (XH) (XI) (XJ) (XK) (XL) (XM) (XN) (XO) (XP) (XQ) (XR) (XS) (XT) (XU) (XV) (XW) (XX) (XY) (XZ) (YA) (YB) (YC) (YD) (YE) (YF) (YG) (YH) (YI) (YJ) (YK) (YL) (YM) (YN) (YO) (YP) (YQ) (YR) (YS) (YT) (YU) (YV) (YW) (YX) (YY) (YZ) (ZA) (ZB) (ZC) (ZD) (ZE) (ZF) (ZG) (ZH) (ZI) (ZJ) (ZK) (ZL) (ZM) (ZN) (ZO) (ZP) (ZQ) (ZR) (ZS) (ZT) (ZU) (ZV) (ZW) (ZX) (ZY) (ZZ)

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One of my acquaintances confined himself, hilariously, to unintelligible grunts and gestures

It was all very well for people to go on about the important part Severiano Ballesteros played without striking a ball for Europe in the Ryder Cup, but an irritating feature of sport today is the extent to which advisers are permitted to intrude on the action.

The impression grows that if some football coaches had their way players would be wired up to receive information. I can think of some whose eyes would light up if the facility were made available to them.

In fact Arsenal experimented with this many years ago at their training ground. The Welsh international Mel Charles, the younger brother of John Charles, found the experience utterly baffling.

After 10 minutes Charles, an instinctive player, tore out his ear-piece and stamped on it. "I'm so fucking confused," he said, "that I don't even know which way I'm supposed to be kicking."

One of the reasons why football has become so fashionable is because spectators can be zany and creative in their enthusiasm. Unfortunately for coaches when their teams have not been winning enough, which usually is the case, the crowd can get sullen and mutinous. In his efforts to avoid this, the coach advises against spontaneity.

The immediate visible result is that coaches come more and more into the picture, often exhibiting quite violent excitement. Such

behaviour figures so often in the televising of football that a monthly award for touchline animation would come as no surprise personally.

It is not that long ago since touchline instruction was frowned on by the authorities. Coaches were required to remain seated and comport themselves in a manner that did not provoke the audience. Now they are allowed within a yard of play to issue orders and admonishment.

Until recently, rugby union teams remained on the field at half-time, beyond the reach of their coaches. The interval is now spent in the dressing-room and the captain's influence has consequently diminished.



KEN JONES

A gift for humourless, non-stop overstatement of the obvious turns some coaches into parodies of themselves. One of my acquaintances confined himself, hilariously, to unintelligible grunts and gestures. Joe Mercer once admitted that

his gifts in management had little bearing on the transformation that saw Aston Villa come from a 4-0 interval deficit to draw 5-5. "I was so mad that I kicked over the tea urn and left them to it," he said.

In the recorded history of sport, players are seldom disappointed by a change in management. A new coach is a new hope, a chance to show that the old coach did not know what he was doing when he failed to recognise their extraordinary ability. It means they won't have to listen to the same old spiel, the same threats and pleas - they'll get exciting new ones.

The idea Brian Clough conveyed to his championship teams at Derby County and Nottingham

Forest was that they were nothing without him. No player was safe from his scolding tongue.

One of the things we have to remember is that team players are often so occupied by their small piece of the action and so preoccupied with themselves and their fears, that they rarely have a conception of the big picture of the team or the game. That is why modern coaches take more and more upon themselves.

This has the paradoxical effect of creating problems in initiative that the coach is trying to alleviate. After Liverpool edged nervously past Celtic in the UEFA Cup this week, the BBC pundit Alan Hansen touched on the difficulties confronting their

manager, Roy Evans. In Hansen's view the players should be accepting a lot more responsibility for Liverpool's patchy performances.

The trouble with the procedure that keeps coaching staffs occupied, alert and off the streets at night, is that it contains the seeds of its own destruction. In time players become conditioned to the notion that there will always be someone to do their thinking.

Encouraging more initiative than the game plan normally allows may seem like a sign of weakness to a coach, of losing control, of defeat, a reflection on his genius. What they should bear in mind is that sport was meant to be unrehearsed entertainment.

Unloved Lewis to show his evil side

Britain's Lennox Lewis will be the loneliest man in Atlantic City when he defends his World Boxing Council heavyweight title in the early hours of Sunday, but, as he told Glyn Leach, that might just bring out the devil in him.

In times of adversity, a man discovers who his true friends are and for Lennox Lewis, a penny appears to have dropped regarding his six-year relationship with American promotional group Main Events. On Saturday evening, local time, in Atlantic City, the World Boxing Council heavyweight champion faces Poland's Andrew Golota, a Main Events stablemate, and Lewis has no doubts as to whom his "mentors" wish to win.

"It would be in Main Events' interest to get me beaten because they have more control over Golota and more investment in him than me," Lewis says. "It's just the way that boxing is."

Lewis is promoted by the London outfit Panix, co-promoted by Main Events, but the Chicago-based Golota belongs to the men from Totowa, New Jersey, lock, stock and barrel. Americans might term it a "no-brainer".

Lewis has often talked, if not always convincingly, of his willingness to face reality and there is no denying the truth of his situation; the men who helped make Lewis are now willing to break him. The chess-loving champion has become a pawn

to be sacrificed for a piece perceived to be of greater worth in the long-term game.

"I don't like to think that Main Events see me as past my sell-by date," says Lewis. "But if they do, they're taking a hell of a gamble."

Golota is known for his fouls and transgressions rather than his victories. But while he may be one of boxing's *bêtes noires*, the Polish giant is a genuine great white hope; mean, moody and marketable. Lewis, despite just one defeat in 32 fights (25 wins by KO), has been found to be none of those things. Lewis has failed to capture the American public's imagination. And in boxing, if you don't sell you can go to hell.

Lewis, 32, is perhaps guilty of nothing more than a failure to stand up and be counted. Is he British, is he Canadian? Is he a boxer, is he a puncher? People are confused by the east London native with the transatlantic accent, so brutally effective an attacking force yet so often a seemingly reluctant aggressor.

A pleasant if somewhat aloof individual, Lewis, unlike many of his boxing contemporaries, seeks not to offend. But it seems that his half-hearted attempts to be all things to all men have resulted in him meaning very little to anyone. Anywhere.

In Britain, where Lewis has not fought since September 1994, his popularity has dwindled. Despite his fight being vastly the more competitive, Sky Sports has initially chose to present the following weekend's relatively routine outing by Naseem Hamed on a pay-per-view basis.

In the States, this fight is all

about Golota. Main Events are paying Lewis more than they ever have, \$7m (£5.4m), to defend his title against a fighter patently undeserving of a shot; a man disqualified for low blows in his last two fights. This will be Lewis's first pay-per-view fight in America and the reason this window of greater financial opportunity has opened for him is Golota, the wrecked of Riddick Bowe, the "Beast from the East" that America wants to see beaten. But by one of their own, not by a spurious citizen of the world like Lewis.

When Golota sparred in Times Square, New York, earlier this week, a crowd of 300 admirers chanted his name. Advance tickets sales of 11,000 for the fight at the Atlantic City Convention Center have brought projections of the biggest fight crowd in the East Coast gambling mecca since 20,000 people watched George Foreman challenge Evander Holyfield in 1991.

"Make no mistake, 95 per cent of that crowd will be behind Golota. It's going to be very hostile," Emanuel Steward, Lewis's trainer and co-manager, said. "Lennox has never gone out of his way to ingratiate himself with people. He's not Frank Bruno, and this is the result."

For the first time since before his fight with Gary Mason, who was stopped in seven at Wembley Arena in March 1991, Lewis is an underdog.

If Golota can keep it clean, the American consensus says, victory is well within his grasp. The heat is on for Lewis, the pressure mounting and, he believes, a psychological assault has already begun.



Ready for trouble: Lennox Lewis, the champion who expects a hostile reception in Atlantic City

Photograph: AP

Main Events claim to be embarrassed by the sense of alienation Lewis has expressed in the run-in to this fight. Have they not supported him for years? Was it not they who, in March 1996, fought a legal

battle to win him a shot at the WBC title?

But it was also Main Events who failed to have Lewis picked up from the airport. They who did not have a suite booked for him when he arrived at his At-

lantic City hotel. Mind games or misunderstandings? Lewis is in no doubt. "There's plenty of evidence to say they're against me," Lewis said. "But it brings out the best in me, makes me more determined. And it will

give me the motivation to prove that I, too, can be evil in the ring."

Perhaps, at last, the real Lewis is ready to stand up and take the acclaim he has been denied. It would not be before time.

World title chance for Eubank

Chris Eubank has been given a surprise opportunity to become the World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight champion once again.

The Brighton-based former world champion will fight the 25-year-old Welshman Joe Calzaghe in an interim title bout with the winner to meet the holder, Steve Collins.

The Irishman Collins and the No 1 contender Calzaghe - a southpaw undefeated in 22 fights - were due to meet in Sheffield on 11 October, but the fight has been postponed for the third time after Collins withdrew with a leg injury.

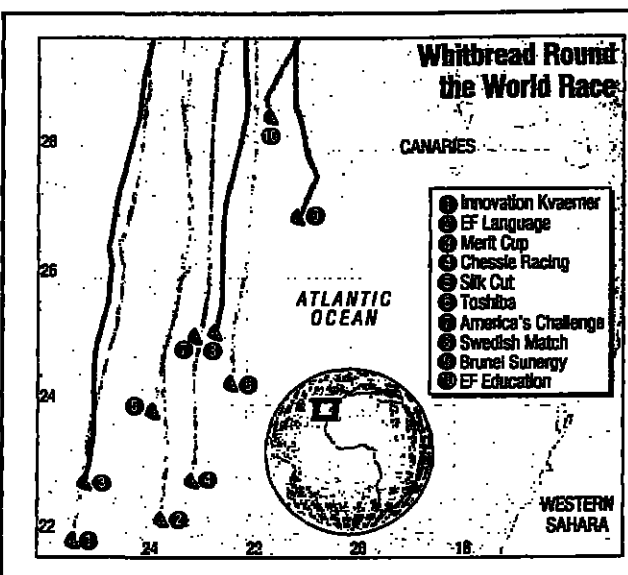
The promoter Frank Warren has instead turned to the 31-year-old Eubank, who was due to fight a light-heavyweight contest on the same bill.

"This fight has been postponed three times now and we've done all we can to accommodate Steve, but we can't go on like this," Warren said.

Eubank will have to shed 6lb to make the 12st weight limit and step down to the super-middleweight division, something which prompted concern from the British Boxing Board of Control.

"We shall be wanting to know what Chris weighs now so we are satisfied he can dehydrate sufficiently to 12 stone to make the weight," John Morris, the BBBC secretary, said.

Eubank, a veteran of 49 contests, the last one in Egypt, does not expect any problems slimming down. "I am 12 stone 6 now so it's not a lot and before I fought Michael Watson for the first time I lost 19lbs," he said, "so I'll do it just by training and going on my usual fruit diet."



Computers and know-how sunk by the weather

Pundits and crystal ball gazers have all been made to look as much off the pace as the competitors in the first 10 days of the Whitbread Round the World Race. Stuart Alexander explains how the weather has defied the cream of ocean racing.

A fast race with the 10-boat fleet bunched all the way round was how the Whitbread was supposed to turn out. Instead the multi-million pound yachts are spread over 200 miles of sea from east to west, with 427 miles the distance from the leader to the back marker.

The favourites were Chris Dickson in Toshiba, who is now furthest east of the top contenders, and Britain's Lawrie Smith in Silk Cut. But where do we find them? A long way behind in fifth and sixth places.

The new generation of W60 boats were expected to be significantly quicker than the boats which competed for the first time in 1993-94. Instead, they are well behind schedule and there has been talk of food rationing in order to avoid running out before the end of the 7,350-mile leg from Southampton to Cape Town.

In control has not been the prodigious line-up of racing talent, nor the know-how of some of the best navigators hooked into powerful computers.

The boss has been the fickle weather and light winds, though those who have followed the Royal Navy maxim issued in 1732, to go as far west as possible rather than sailing closer to the African mainland, seem to have benefited.

Innovation Kvaerner was leading by 40 miles yesterday and after her came Paul Cayard's EF Language and Grant Dalton's Merit Cup. But although they were well separated on the water, there was less than a mile in distance to the finish between the second and third boats.

Nor has there been much shuffling of positions, though the dice will again be rolled again over the next few days as the fleet chooses where, if not always when, it will cross the Doldrums.

Once through the Doldrums, there should be trade winds for days on end, but until then the underlying emotion will be anxiety, especially about being left behind in the sticky heat and unpredictable squalls.

Smith's mood was sombre as the leading boats, heading towards the Cape Verde Islands, ran into fresher breezes. "It looks like things may get worse before they get any better in terms of mileage lost," he said.

WHITBREAD RACE (First leg, 7,350 miles, Southampton to Cape Town). Last positions: 1 Innovation Kvaerner (Nor), 2 EF Language (Nor), 3 Merit Cup (Nor), 4 Chesapeake (Nor), 5 Silk Cut (GB), 6 Toshiba (GB), 7 America's Challenge (USA), 8 Brunel Sunergy (GB), 9 EF Education (GB), 10 Gullion (+425).

Ruud boys

Slovan Bratislava vs Chelsea live from 7:20 tonight on 5

The number of teams of the 32 left in the European Cup-Winners' Cup who have won a European trophy. Chelsea won the Cup-Winners' Cup in 1971, while their opponents tonight, Slovan Bratislava, won it in 1969. Red Star Belgrade won the European Cup in 1991.

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FOOTBALL: CHAMPIONS' LEAGUE

Ferguson's swashbuckling United come of age in Europe

Glenn Moore
Manchester United.....3
Juventus.....2

What style, what passion, what a wonderful performance. There is a long, long way to go but Manchester United last night earned the right to dream of the European glory they crave.

Already short of Roy Keane they found themselves trailing to Juventus, widely accepted as the Continent's best, after just 24 seconds. They then lost Nicky Butt, but from then on it was a night of glory as Teddy Sheringham, Paul Scholes and Ryan Giggs scored the goals to beat one of the best defences in Europe.

While rumours concerning Keane's knee injury swept Manchester (out for anything from a fortnight to the end of the season) Alex Ferguson was concentrating on finding a replacement for at the evening – and probably the rest of the Champions' League. Ronnie Johnsen, who had played only 36 minutes since coming back from a thigh injury, got the nod in partnership with Butt.

It was a lot to ask of the Norwegian and his lack of match-sharpness was exposed from the start as United, having kicked off, found themselves behind after 24 seconds.

Johnsen was dispossessed around the centre circle and the ball was quickly played from Didier Deschamps to Manuel Dias on the left. His pass found Alessandro Del Piero's perfectly timed run behind Henning Berg. A neat drag-back dummied Peter Schmeichel and Berg before he coolly rolled the ball in.

It took a while for United to get back into the game and Juventus were able to stroke the ball about without creating any serious chances. Lifted by their supporters – who were increasingly infuriated by both the refereeing and the Italians' arrogance – United rallied. Hen-



Alessandro Del Piero slides the ball past Manchester United's Peter Schmeichel to put Juventus 1-0 up after just 24 seconds of last night's Champions' League match at Old Trafford

Photograph: Allsport

ning Berg headed over and Johnsen brought a reaction save from Angelo Peruzzi.

Deschamps and Fabio Pecchia were booked for crude fouls – and Montero and Alessandro Birindelli should have been – as Juventus fought to restore control but it took a linesman's flag to halt United.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer being spotted offside after Sheringham headed in from Denis Irwin's 16th minute long throw.

It was a further indication of Italian vulnerability in the air and, with Giggs now switched from the "hole" to the left wing, and Johnsen settling in midfield, United tore forward. After 28

minutes they nearly scored when a cross from the David Beckham was neatly touched on by Giggs and Sheringham to Solskjaer only for Peruzzi to save well.

Ten minutes later Sheringham played the ball out to the left and, when Giggs's deep cross came in, the England striker was there to rise above

Montero and head in. United's joy was unconfined but their enthusiasm cost them a booking as Giggs was penalised for heading the ball out of Peruzzi's hands to "score".

United's first-half recovery had raised the temperature and it threatened to boil over early in the second half with

Johnsen clashing with Montero and Sheringham with Ferrara. The latter row followed a calculating foul on Giggs as he threatened to burst through the Italian defence. Ferrara was booked.

So was Del Piero as Juventus struggled to contain a United side now bubbling with

belief. Under pressure as they were, the Italians continued to try and pass the ball and always presented a latent threat.

However, with 25 minutes to go their numbers were reduced as Deschamps pulled one shirt to many. That it belonged to Johnsen was irrelevant, but his second yellow card was not.

Three minutes after he departed, Juventus were in further disarray as Scholes put United ahead. Sheringham was yards offside as Pallister played a ball through after Berg had won a header but Scholes was not. As the Italians stopped, he dribbled past them, Sheringham and Peruzzi to score.

A magical night for the United fans was capped in the last minute when Giggs crowned an outstanding performance with a brilliantly taken goal. It looked like the icing on the cake but it turned out to be more important than that as, in injury time, Zinedine Zidane curled a free-kick past Schmeichel.

Manchester United (4-3-2-1): Schmeichel, G. Neville, Berg, Pallister, Irwin, Beckham, Johnsen, Butt, Scholes, 38; Giggs, Sheringham, Solskjaer (P. Neville, 45, Substitutes (not used): Van der Gouw (24), May, McClellan, Clegg, Curtis.

Juventus (4-3-2-1): Peruzzi, Birindelli, Ferrara, Montero, Dumas, Pecchia, Lukano, 68; Deschamps, Tacchinardi (Pessotto, 68, Zidane, Inzaghi, Del Piero (Anzuso, 79) Substitutes (not used): Rampulla (24), Padovano, Fonseca, Zamboni.

Referee: A. Lopez Naez (SP).
More reports, Results, page 36

Giggs' electric glide on the wing gains glory for Old Trafford

Manchester United needed an outstanding performance from someone last night if they were to get the better of Juventus in the Champions' League at Old Trafford. Guy Hodgson watched the man most likely to provide it: Ryan Giggs.

Alex Ferguson could not afford to pinpoint any single player last night. "I don't care who is our

matchwinner," he had said beforehand. But the Manchester United manager could be forgiven had his gaze lingered on the slight figure in the No 11 as he searched for a hero.

It is a long time since anyone compared Ryan Giggs to George Best. It was a fatuous exercise anyway, holding up the Welshman to a talent that burned more furiously than anyone else at Old Trafford, but injury has made it more so. Even the incomparable would have had his wings clipped if he had spent as much time on the treatment table as he did at the bar.

The last time Giggs could give full vent to his special gifts without the fear of inflaming a physical impediment was in the 1993-94 Double season. Since then there have been intermittent bursts between lay-offs.

Last season's game against Juventus was one of those special nights. For 45 minutes Giggs bewitched the Italians, inspiring hope and fear with every twisting run. He repeated the performance against Porto at Old Trafford yet the season ended with him clutching a championship medal and also another fitness straw: an

operation on a double hernia. "You are seeing a player back to full fitness," Ferguson had said after Giggs' electric performance against Everton earlier in the season only for him to break down with hamstring problems. He was back last night but it was after only 15 minutes football in the past two and a half weeks.

The memory of Giggs' quicksilver feet knocking the plumb off the Juve defenders prompted Ferguson to play him through the middle. It was a tactical mistake.

Juventus knew where the

danger lay and Paolo Montero felled Giggs with a chop to the knee as he attempted to cut in from the right. But, when Nicky Butt went off to be replaced by Paul Scholes, Giggs moved to the security blanket of the flank. It changed the tone of the match.

With the first run down his favoured flank, opportunity beckoned. Presented with the acres beyond Fabio Pecchia and Alessandro Birindelli he rocketed to the byline and delivered a teasing pass over Angelo Peruzzi in the Juventus goal. Teddy Sheringham probably dreams of crosses like

that and he thumped a header for United's equaliser.

The route to Juventus' weak point had been exposed by that 39th-minute thrust. Giggs, on the left, was facing the Italians instead of playing with his back to them. In the 53rd minute he skipped past two defenders before being felled by Ciro Ferrara.

Instead of running into cul-de-sac, United had an outlet. Giggs worried Juventus almost every time he received the ball, and his glorious, twisting run in the 88th minute and precise, angled shot resulted in United's third goal.

Beresford dynamic as Newcastle gain parity

Carl Liddle
reports from Kiev
Dynamo Kiev.....2
Newcastle United.....2

Newcastle maintained their unbeaten record in the Champions' League when they staged a brave recovery from a two-goal deficit in Ukraine last night. They were on the rack for much of the game but held their nerve to steal a point.

The Olympiski Stadium was packed to something approaching its 100,000 capacity as Newcastle were given a warm welcome even though the temperature had dipped to below freezing. But Dynamo quickly seized the initiative, taking the lead within four minutes. Valentin Belkevich beat Steve Watson down the right and when he crossed Sergei Rebrov stole ahead of John Beresford to head past Shay Given from six yards.

Newcastle hit back with Faustino Asprilla and David Batty prominent, but Dynamo looked dangerous on the break with Andrei Shevchenko particularly menacing.

Rebrov was finding plenty of space to attack down the right but in the 11th minute, after he seemed to have broken free, Beresford got back to make a

decisive challenge on the dangerous Ukrainian international striker.

Asprilla lost the ball on the edge of the home penalty box in the 13th minute and was booked when he lunged at Yuri Dimitrulin. In the 15th minute the Colombian should have equalised. Picking the ball up 15 yards out he blazed the ball straight at the goalkeeper, Alexander Shovkovsky.

Asprilla then hit a 23rd-minute free-kick straight at the defensive wall from 22 yards and immediately went down injured. It looked as though he had twisted his knee attempting to curl the ball over the defensive wall. He was carried off on a stretcher.

Before Jon Dahl Tomasson could take his place Dynamo had gone two up. Shevchenko steered a low shot wide of the advancing Given after being sent clear by Belkevich.

Newcastle introduced Timur Ketsbaia at the start of the second half for Rob Lee, who had passed a fitness test just before the game on a thigh injury.

Dynamo continued to look dangerous and Shevchenko raced through the Newcastle defence only to shoot straight at Given. When the Magpies finally got a shot on target, it was such a weak effort from John Barnes that Shovkovsky

merely had to wait and collect.

Philippe Albert and John Beresford were fortunate to escape bookings as Newcastle's frustration mounted. Kiev almost increased their lead from a free-kick awarded for a Beresford foul, but Given made a great save from Kossovsky. Given again came to his side's rescue in the 63rd minute when the defender Vladislav Vashchuk moved up and lashed in a shot which the keeper did well to hold.

Newcastle had been outplayed, but they pulled a goal back in the 77th minute. The Dynamo defence failed to clear a long throw from Watson and Beresford popped up to get in a rather weak right-foot shot which went through the legs of Shovkovsky. It was Beresford's third goal in Europe following his two against Croatia Zagreb.

Newcastle stunned Dynamo when they snatched an equaliser five minutes from time. Kiev could not clear a left wing corner and Beresford tried his luck from 30 yards, with the ball taking a wicked deflection off Alexander Golovko to leave Shovkovsky stranded.

Dynamo Kiev: Shovkovsky, Luzhny, Golovko, Vashchuk, Dimitrulin, Kossovsky, Shevchenko, Rebrov, Galkin, Khushkevich, Belkevich.

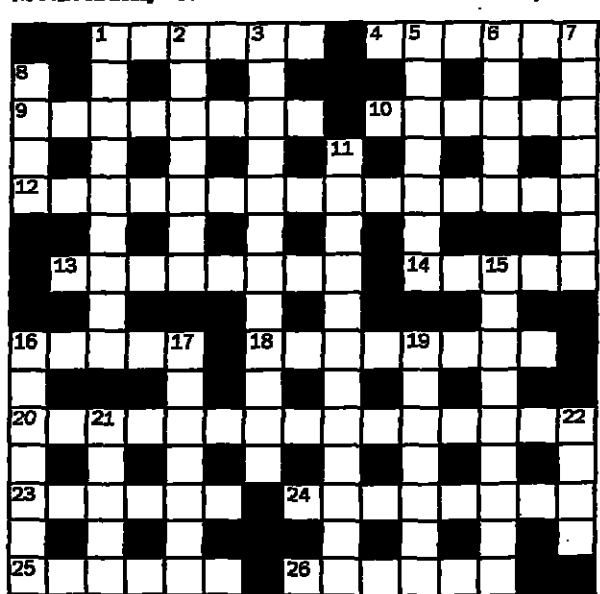
Newcastle United: Given, Barton, Preece, Albert, Beresford, Watson, Lee, Ketsbaia, 1st; Batty, Gillespie, Barnes, Asprilla (Tomasson, 94).
Referee: P. Mikelsen (Denmark).
Photograph, page 31

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No 3419, Thursday 2 October

By Miss

Wednesday's solution



- ACROSS**
- Second driver's crusty... (6)
 - ... turning sharp into quiet Scottish valley (6)
 - Knight's driven back by pawn in veritable retaliation (8)
 - Many holding abridged service for the deity (6)
 - You'll find the colours run in these (8,7)
 - Identify measure (maybe a gin) consumed (8)
 - A drop-out with large joints (5)
 - Parishioners ooze with inner faith ultimately (5)
 - Sacred fish about, in heart of Galilee (8)
 - Cut in error, struggling with a tin: time for medical application (15)
 - Glass dome in a castle in Spain (6)
 - Letter about Italian food additive (8)
 - Headpiece – first of tiaras on a Pope (6)
 - Back part of hoof, not front (6)
- DOWN**
- Drink I serve, mixed, will produce head (9)
 - Eternal suffering (7)
 - Vagrants associated with washed-up specimens (13)
 - Nuisance turned up, American hard hat (7)
 - A yearning letter (5)
 - Plant with upright attribute (7)
 - Birds ignoring lake boats (4)
 - Turbine fares badly, not one fed by right energy boosters (12)
 - This should soften coat I misapplied in design (9)
 - Instrument, object under fire (7)
 - Two girls showing a bit of leg (7)
 - Reflect – i.e. about ace in hand (7)
 - Brown topos figure (5)
 - Kicked, getting dragged audibly (4)

PAUCITY, STUNNED, UNIFORM, NOISE, UPPERCASE, ELO, PIRROCH, OAWAGER, JELLY, YUE, OMEGA, DOORSTEP, B, REJOURNE, OBSTACLE, A, IN, M, W, E, R, C, O, N, J, A, M, A, R, E, F, U, S, I, O, N, A, D, O, N, I, O, U, S, I, D, E, R, O, B, I, N, O, U, R, S, E, L, V, E, S, I, C, A, U, S, U, L, I, E, D, U, E, L, L, I, S, T, E, D, W, A, R, D